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Alfred Hitchcock as a Cinematic Architect of Suspense

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ALFRED HITCHCOCK AS A CINEMATIC ARCHITECT OF SUSPENSE

BY

HANNAH BOTH

COMMITTEE CHAIR

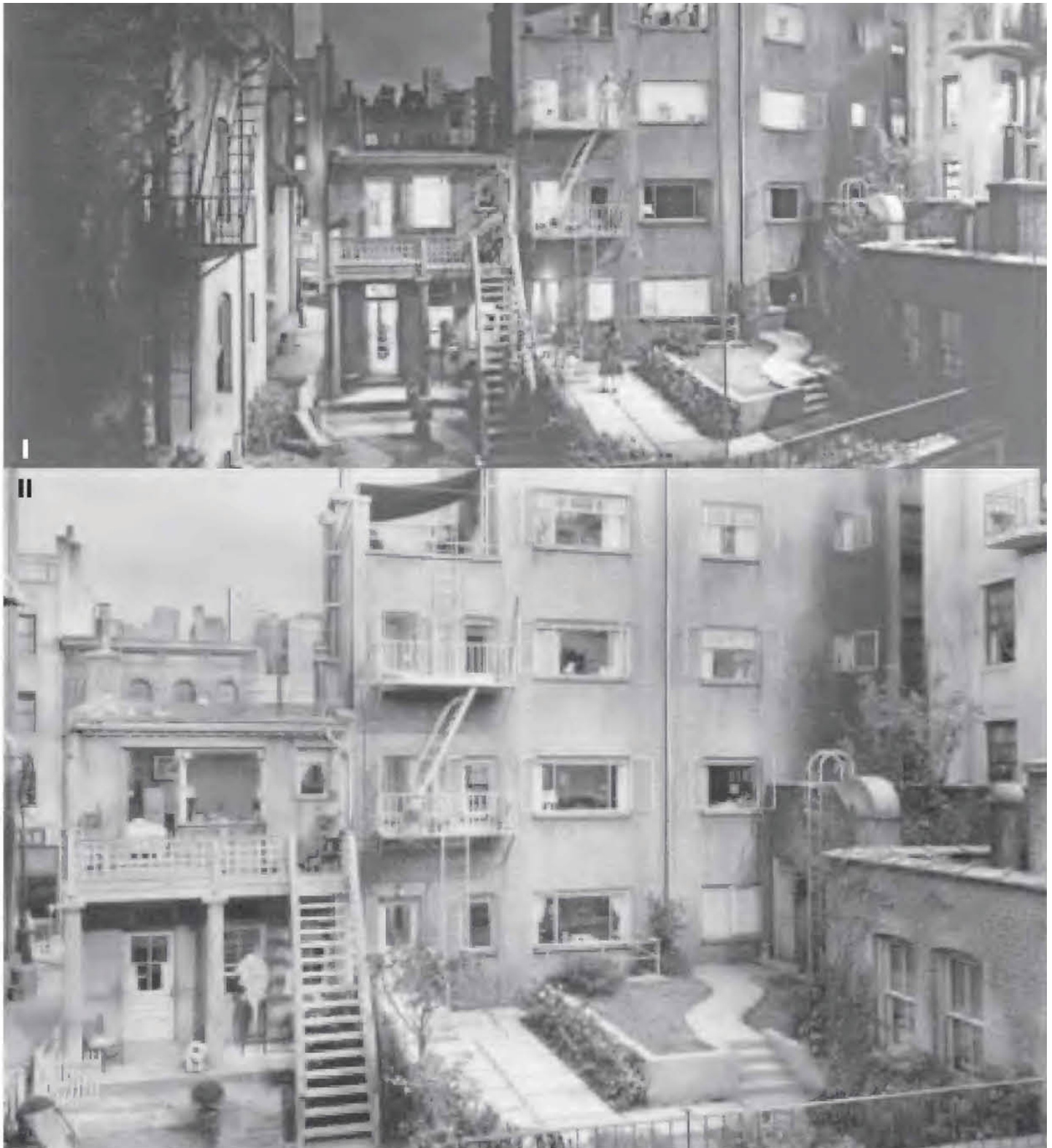
TAHAR MESSADI

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

RUSSELL RUDZINSKI

BRIAN HOLLAND

TORREY TRACEY



Jacobs, Steven, *The Wrong House: The Architecture of Alfred Hitchcock* (Rotterdam: 010 Publishers, 2007) 283.

A photocollage reconstructing the entire set of *Rear Window* within one image by piecing together frames from the film to interpolate the space.

FADE IN:

INT. JEFFERIES' APARTMENT – (DAY) – LONG SHOT¹

ACT I: THE QUESTION

ARCHITECTURAL SPACE can be represented and perceived through a multitude of artistic mediums that imitate or suggest a spatial understanding. Cinema and architecture are the main focus of this Capstone investigation due to their mutual propensity to represent life, choreograph experience, and evoke emotion. The essence of this research can be understood within the following question:

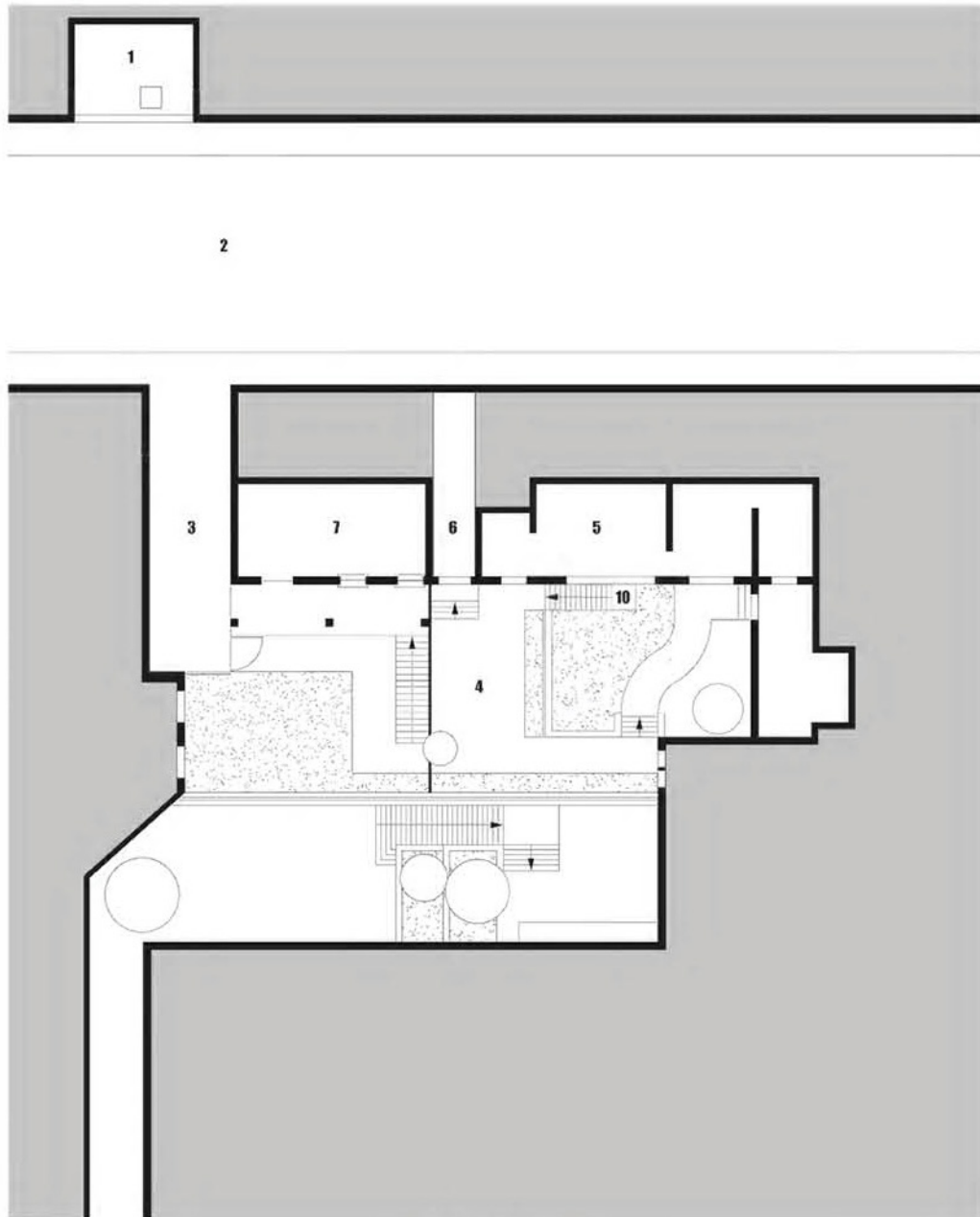
How does Alfred Hitchcock as a cinematic architect
construct suspense in space and how do these strategies
translate architecturally?

ARCHITECTURE USED AS A CINEMATIC DEVICE is perceptually understood and experienced mentally as space when represented in film. Alfred Hitchcock, most notably, constructs cinematic architecture as a device to develop suspense through his depictions of space. Suspense is developed and curated through the implied passage of time by the sequential understanding of frames arranged in a linear narrative. Mental linear experience of individual moments or frames to produce an understandable narrative in cinema is established through a sequentially developed understanding. The view is controlled by the director where the spectator's only understanding of space is the one given or implied by Hitchcock's control of the frame. For instance in the opening scene of *Rear Window*, Hitchcock constructs a sense of space by slowly panning through the courtyard pointedly pausing on aspects that later become central to the plot. In contrast, an understanding of space in architecture is not so much a defined linear narrative, but rather choreographed spaces where the architect acts as director. As opposed to a predetermined cinematic path through space, architecture relies on an understanding of space loosely defined and choreographed by the architect but physically directed and experienced by the individual. Similar to cinematic spatial constructions, the physical built world of architecture has the ability to evoke an emotional response based on the perception of spaces.

SUSPENSE IS DEFINED as a feeling of uncertainty and
expectation as to what might happen.²

¹ Hayes, John Michael. *Rear Window*. Film Script. 1953.

² "Suspense: Definition of Suspense by Lexico." Lexico Dictionaries,
<https://www.lexico.com/en/definition/suspense>.



Jacobs, Steven, *The Wrong House: The Architecture of Alfred Hitchcock* (Rotterdam: 010 Publishers, 2007) 279.

Ground floor plan depicting the arrangement of apartments and their situation within the courtyard.

1. Restaurant
2. Street
3. Alley
4. Courtyard
5. Miss Lonelyhearts's Apartment
6. Corridor
7. Sculptress's Apartment
8. Miss Torso's Apartment
9. Thorwald's Apartment

SUSPENSE IS A BROAD TERM used here to define the emotions produced through Hitchcock's direction and cinematic spatiality. Suspense can be further broken down into employable spatial strategies architecturally. To develop a sense of suspense, Hitchcock deploys cinematic strategies such as slowly revealing the space the film is situated in, consequently withholding information from the viewer. Architectural space developed by confinement and emphasized through the physical distance between characters in his work is essential to the development of suspenseful cinematic space. Throughout the film Hitchcock is in control of every aspect, guiding the audience skillfully through the scenes in the film directing the viewer's eye either by focusing on architectural elements or through the view seen by the characters.³ Simultaneously, Jefferies is the viewer and director within the film as we "follow his whim and association of seemingly unrelated events into a sinister plot."⁴ Hitchcock very strategically focuses the frame of the film forcing the spectator to fixate on the view provided constantly provoking suspicion about what details are left out of frame.

FADE OUT TO BLACK

FADE IN:

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD – DAY – LONG SHOT⁵

ACT II: ALFRED HITCHCOCK'S *REAR WINDOW*

JUHANI PALAASMA

"The narrative logic of the film, its architectural messages, role characterizations, atmospheres and secret hints, camera angles and shot compositions, space and image details, and words and music constitute a mosaic that builds up the suspense with the infallibility of the geometrist."⁶

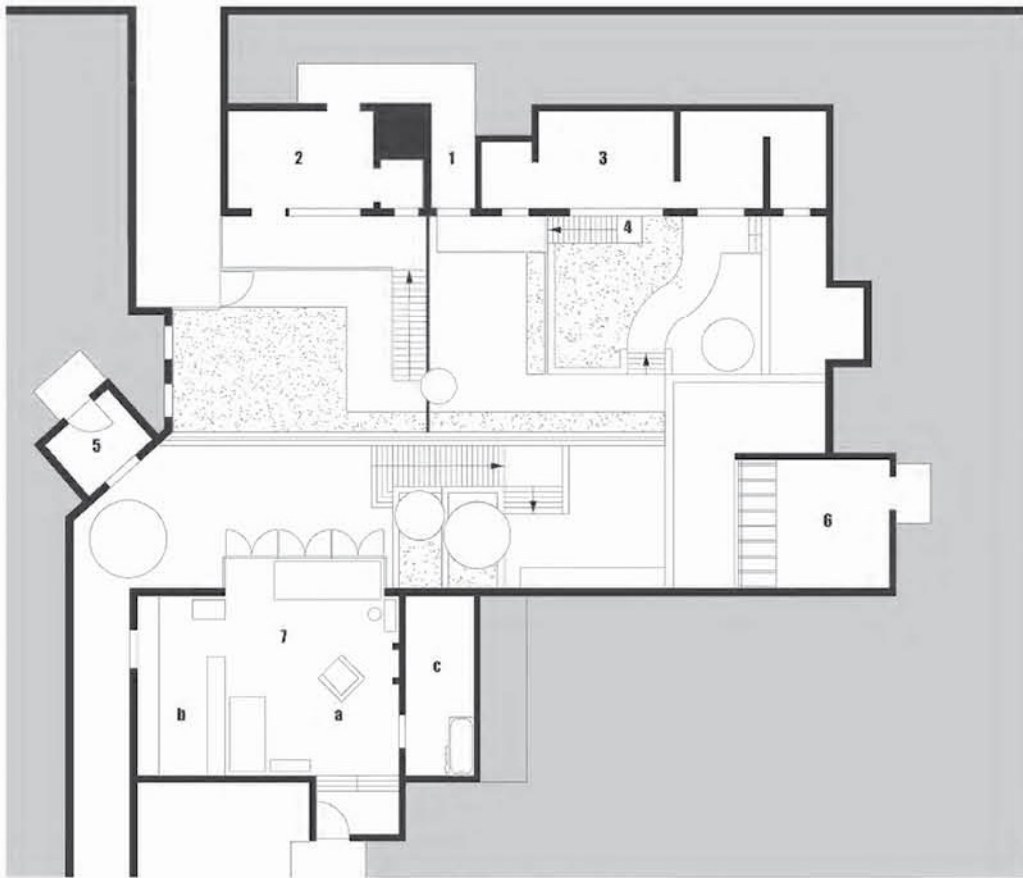
REAR WINDOW WAS DIRECTED BY ALFRED HITCHCOCK in 1954 and constitutes the most complete architectural representation of cinema within his oeuvre. The

³ Jacobs, Steven. *The Wrong House: The Architecture of Alfred Hitchcock*. (Rotterdam: 010 Publishers, 2007) 149.

⁴ Pallasmaa, Juhani. *The Architecture of Image: Existential Space in Cinema*. (Helsinki: Rakennustieto Publishing, 2007) 152-153.

⁵ Hayes, John Michael. *Rear Window*. Film Script. 1953.

⁶ Pallasmaa, Juhani. *The Architecture of Image: Existential Space in Cinema*. (Helsinki: Rakennustieto Publishing, 2007) 149.



Jacobs, Steven, *The Wrong House: The Architecture of Alfred Hitchcock* (Rotterdam: 010 Publishers, 2007) 280.

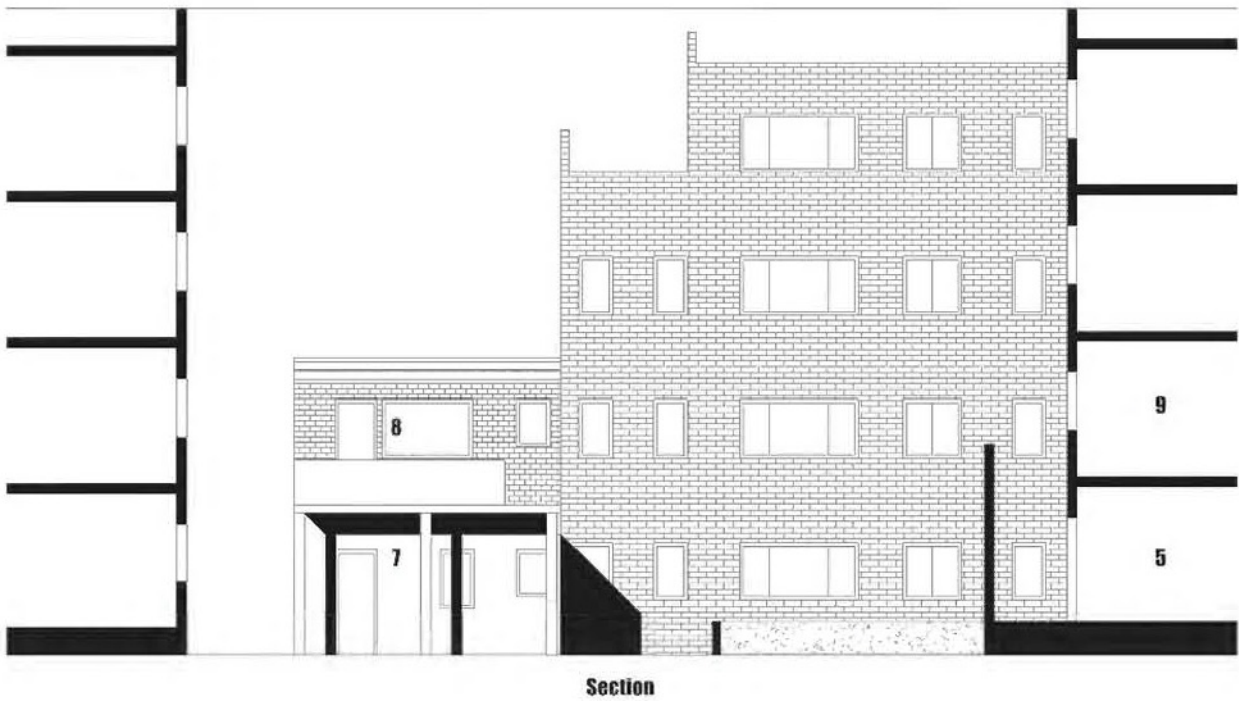
Upper floor plan depicting the arrangement of apartments and their situation within the courtyard.

1. Corridor
2. Miss Torso's Apartment
3. Thorwald's Apartment
4. Balcony with Fire Escape
5. Newlywed's Apartment
6. Composer's Apartment
7. Jefferies's Apartment
 - a. Living Room
 - b. Kitchen
 - c. Bathroom

film was shot within a completely constructed studio set.⁷ Each apartment was outfitted to fully develop each character as an individual and perspectively manipulated to provide the best view from Jefferies's window.⁸ L.B. Jefferies is the main character of the film, played by James Stewart. Jefferies is a professional photographer whose on the job injury bounds him to a wheelchair. His small New York apartment is the fixed viewpoint from which the audience nearly experiences the entirety of the film. To pass the time Jefferies, from his rear window, observes his neighbors through the frames of their own rear windows. Through this observation, Jefferies begins to suspect his neighbor Mr. Thorwald of murdering his wife, Mrs. Thorwald. This suspicion is garnered through her sudden disappearance after consistently witnesses their intense arguing and mutual hatred. Jefferies observes, occasionally with the company of Lisa and Stella, Thorwald cleaning butcher knives, taking suspicious trips in the night, and removing all traces of his wife by getting rid of her things. Up until this point the narrative occurs through the safe, hidden view from Jefferies's apartment across the courtyard. This distance between Jefferies's apartment and murder scene is crossed when Lisa and Stella venture down to the courtyard to check the flower bed for evidence of murder. When no evidence is found, unperturbed Lisa takes the daring step of climbing the fire escape into Thorwald's apartment. In the midst of searching for proof, Lisa gets caught by Thorwald in his apartment. The viewer is tied to the same viewpoint as Jefferies throughout the altercation. Witnessing the altercation through the restricted view of Thorwald's rear window, Jefferies's only means of assistance is calling the cops. Thorwald and Lisa go in and out of view hidden by brick partitions subdividing each window until the cops arrive to break up the fight before things can escalate. However, when Lisa signals to Jefferies that she found the desired evidence by showing him Mrs. Thorwald's wedding rings on her own fingers, Thorwald tracks her motions to the source by following her gestures to Jefferies's rear window. With Lisa arrested, Jefferies is bound by wheelchair trapped in his apartment with no choice but to face the inevitable conflict with the murderer. As a viewer we wait with him, anxiously watching the light in the thin crack under the door for footsteps. The hulking Thorwald appears in the doorway only momentarily inhibited by Jefferies's blinding flashbulbs. The conflict climaxes with Thorwald assaulting Jefferies just as the cops discover the altercation. From the very rear window he observed Thorwald from a distance, suspecting him of murder, Jefferies finds himself a victim in his own voyeuristic game.

⁷ Jacobs, Steven. *The Wrong House: The Architecture of Alfred Hitchcock*. (Rotterdam: 010 Publishers, 2007) 273.

⁸ Jacobs, Steven. *The Wrong House: The Architecture of Alfred Hitchcock*. (Rotterdam: 010 Publishers, 2007) 288.



Jacobs, Steven, *The Wrong House: The Architecture of Alfred Hitchcock* (Rotterdam: 010 Publishers, 2007) 280.

Section depicting the arrangement of apartments and their situation within the courtyard.

1. Restaurant
2. Street
3. Alley
4. Courtyard
5. Miss Lonelyhearts's Apartment
6. Corridor
7. Sculptress's Apartment
8. Miss Torso's Apartment
9. Thorwald's Apartment

HITCHCOCK was “notorious for the meticulous supervision of his sets.”⁹ He started his career as an art director, creating sets for movie productions. Later, Hitchcock expected his own art directors to have a familiarity with architecture for the purposes of “[distinguishing] between what characterizes a type of dwelling and what individuates the inhabitant of that dwelling.”¹⁰ The focus of many of Hitchcock’s cinematic masterpieces are indicative of architectural environments that suppress characters.¹¹ From the outset of *Rear Window*, the opening scene pans through the courtyard portraying a claustrophobic atmosphere by providing the viewer with an understanding of the overall spatial relationships between architectural settings that are important to the narrative.¹² Jefferies’s apartment becomes the fixed viewpoint from which the audience experiences the narrative. The claustrophobic existence within one small apartment greatly contributes to a consistent building of tension because of the mutual confinement of both main character and viewer.¹³ The fixed viewpoint creates an important spatial restriction making distance architecturally an important element in the plot.¹⁴ Characters most significant to the plot, such as Jefferies and Thorwald, are separated by the shared courtyard for the majority of the film. When that distance is finally closed when Thorwald throws Jefferies from his rear window, the movie reaches its climax and the suspense becomes most palpably felt through the sudden intimacy of the conflict that previously felt safe and distant. “Architecture becomes an instrument of the gaze,” where Hitchcock presents the window as a metaphor for the film screen.¹⁵ The window becomes the means by which the characters and the viewers experience the imagined world of *Rear Window*. Windows become mediators, serving as barriers between light and shadow, and borders between interior and exterior, real and imagined.¹⁶ In *Rear Window* the world is visually constructed entirely by situating a frame between the fictional world and its audience.

STEVEN JACOBS

“Hitchcock paid a lot of attention to the placement of his characters in the frame and consequently, to the visual compositional but also psychological and social

⁹ Jacobs, Steven. *The Wrong House: The Architecture of Alfred Hitchcock*. (Rotterdam: 010 Publishers, 2007) 16.

¹⁰ Jacobs. *The Wrong House: The Architecture of Alfred Hitchcock*. 18.

¹¹ Jacobs. *The Wrong House: The Architecture of Alfred Hitchcock*. 18.

¹² Jacobs. *The Wrong House: The Architecture of Alfred Hitchcock*. 282.

¹³ Spoto, Donald. *The Art of Alfred Hitchcock*. (New York City, NY: Hopkinson and Blake, 1976) 240.

¹⁴ Jacobs. *The Wrong House: The Architecture of Alfred Hitchcock*. 282.

¹⁵ Jacobs. *The Wrong House: The Architecture of Alfred Hitchcock*. 286.

¹⁶ Jacobs. *The Wrong House: The Architecture of Alfred Hitchcock*. 286.



Rear Window. Universal, 1954.

relationship between characters and their surroundings.”¹⁷

DARKNESS is a constant presence and symbol throughout the film. The story begins optimistic but sinister layers are exposed gradually.¹⁸ A sense of claustrophobia develops as the narrative progresses. The air becomes thickened with a cloudy night, where the shadows grow darker and the space becomes heavy. The darkness fosters a false sense of security while enveloping the space in terror as it “wraps around the viewer as a dark, strangled garment.”¹⁹ The courtyard develops a false sense of security and privacy through the seclusion and intimacy of the space. There is a sense of tension between the occupants of the apartment block who collectively share a common courtyard. As strangers they live distinctly separate lives, but with a direct view into each other’s most intimate spaces.²⁰ People are far less inclined to shield themselves from the outside world through their rear windows where they ignorantly assume a measure of privacy. Every neighbor has the opportunity to spy as Jefferies does, but they coexist under the false assumption none will.

THE SET OF REAR WINDOW was fully built. As a result, there is a richness to the film that creates a small universe where the outside world feels distant.²¹ By examining the plans and sections of the set the extent to which it was built becomes clear. Nearly an entire apartment block was constructed for the film, fully outfitted to become subjected to Hitchcock’s complete control. The orthographic drawings put into perspective the size of the site and the physical distance placed between characters. With the world of the film confined to the courtyard and the point of view from the apartment, events that occur off-screen acquire highly specific meanings. For instance, Thorwald travels in and out of his apartment in the middle of a rainy night suspiciously carrying a large briefcase. Jefferies is suspicious of his movements but his view is restricted to Thorwald’s front door and the sliver of street visible through the alley. These events are emphasized by the absence of characters such as Thorwald, or by the restriction of view caused by the buildings within the courtyard.²² Therefore, what occurs on-screen carries as much significance as what is implied off. “The courtyard and surrounding apartments create a stage. Backstage is the hidden darkness where the occupants move from the street to their flats.”²³ The imagination of Jefferies and the viewer is left to freely construct their own suspicions. This idea is facilitated by views being restricted

¹⁷ Jacobs. *The Wrong House: The Architecture of Alfred Hitchcock*. 24.

¹⁸ Jacobs. *The Wrong House: The Architecture of Alfred Hitchcock*. 147.

¹⁹ Jacobs. *The Wrong House: The Architecture of Alfred Hitchcock*. 148.

²⁰ Jacobs. *The Wrong House: The Architecture of Alfred Hitchcock*. 286.

²¹ Jacobs. *The Wrong House: The Architecture of Alfred Hitchcock*. 147.

²² Jacobs. *The Wrong House: The Architecture of Alfred Hitchcock*. 28.

²³ Pallasmaa, Juhani. *The Architecture of Image: Existential Space in Cinema*. 155.



The Newlyweds



Miss Torso



Miss Lonelyhearts



The Composer



Mr. and Mrs. Thorwald
Rear Window. Universal, 1954.



Lisa and Jefferies

through the frame of windows and the sliver of street visible through the alley. As a result, there is only a partial understanding of the events that occur as Jefferies and the audience are only left to wonder what occurs behind the brick walls obscuring the view into Thorwald's apartment. However, the surprisingly simple plan clarifies the distinction between on and off-stage, revealing Hitchcock's previously ambiguous layout of spaces. The apartments and the courtyards become the stage, while the interstitial spaces such as hallways and alleys become transitions off-stage unwittingly harboring the secrets of Jefferies's neighbors.

STEVEN JACOBS

"Instead of an organic unity, the architecture becomes a discontinuous montage of known and unknown, visible and invisible space. Architecture becomes a mental construction."²⁴

THE ENTIRETY OF THE FILM is constructed not before a window but in front of a rear window.²⁵ The significance of the rear window in the film reaches beyond events just happening to occur before it. The entire film was built around the idea of being framed specifically in front of Jefferies's rear window. As a result, Jefferies's vantage point, each neighbor's apartment serve as a voyeuristic channel of entertainment. The tools, like binoculars and cameras, serves as the means to 'channel surf'. Each character embodies a different cinematic genre. Comedy is represented by the newlyweds, physical comedy by the dancer, and melodrama through the life of Miss Lonelyharts, biopic by the composer, and murder mystery by the Thorwald's life. Essentially the film is a series of films combined, representing the lives of many through the lens of one, exploring the confines of cinematic space. "The lives of the tenants develop independently of the main story, but occasionally the climaxes of these stories are connected."²⁶ As a spectator, the pleasure comes from participating in Jefferies's voyeuristic view of his neighbors. Suspense is then developed through the distance of the courtyard between the characters and the relationship between the viewer and unwitting performer.

DONALD SPOTO

"The film exposes the social contagion of suspicious prying view of other's lives and the corruption of the ideal of neighborly love to which this leads."²⁷

²⁴ Jacobs. *The Wrong House: The Architecture of Alfred Hitchcock*. 32.

²⁵ Jacobs. *The Wrong House: The Architecture of Alfred Hitchcock*. 282.

²⁶ Jacobs. *The Wrong House: The Architecture of Alfred Hitchcock*. 286.

²⁷ Spoto, Donald. *The Art of Alfred Hitchcock*. 240.



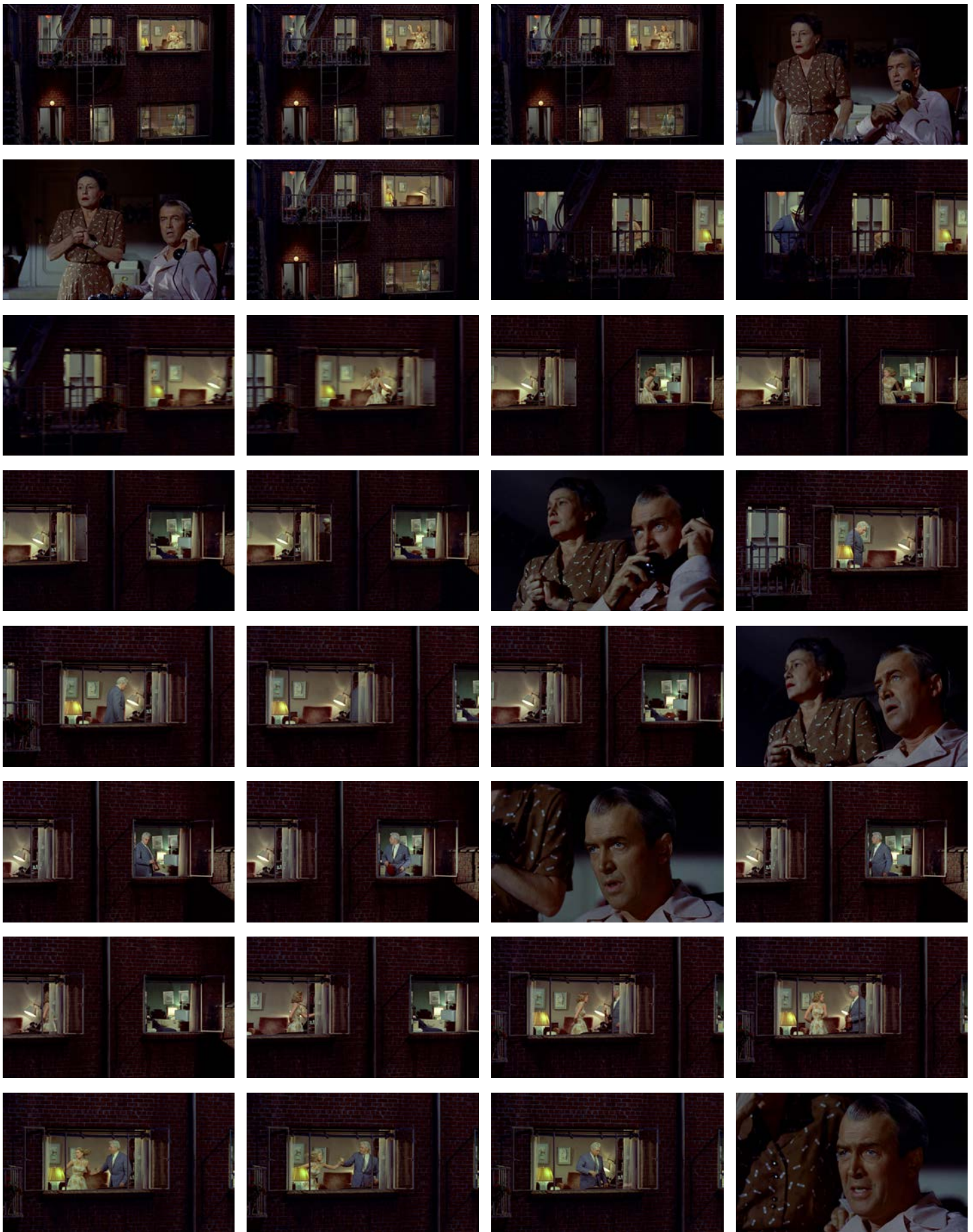
Rear Window. Universal, 1954.

WITHIN *REAR WINDOW* Jefferies's neighbors are unwitting participants in a twisted voyeuristic version of a panopticon. Each apartment represents a cinematic genre then each building serves as a theatre where each apartment serves as an individual stage.²⁸ "*Rear Window* plays self-consciously with the difference between theatrical and cinematic space, relying on set design and certain kinds of camera movements to establish a concrete unified theatrical space and on editing framing and camera movement to construct a more abstract psychological, cinematic film space."²⁹ The relationship between the viewer and the viewed is a theme significant to the narrative of *Rear Window* where the environment is subjected to the force of the gaze. Ultimately the film develops the qualities of both the theatre and the panopticon, transforming the environment into a spectacle where the viewer is rendered invisible.³⁰ A panopticon is an attempt at creating an all seeing spatial organization. The guard is invisible within the tower, where the prisoners residing within the circumference of the circle are on display within their cells. While the prisoners can never know for certain precisely when they are being watched, they are aware of their position on a stage. The essential difference between the relationship of the guard and prisoners to Jefferies and his neighbors is an awareness of the potential of being watched. For the prisoners the assumption of being performers within the stage of their cells is perpetually present. In contrast, *Rear Window* operates under the naïve assumption that neighbors, in New York's dense situation, will not take advantage of their ability to spy. The space of the set is constructed around the relationship between the viewed and viewer, performer and audience, while simultaneously allowing the typologies of panopticon and theatre to coexist. Hitchcock sets up levels of frames within the film. Our perceptual depth within these frames effects the presence of the panopticon and theatre as typologies within the set. The audience's relationship with the film screen sets up the first frame, existing within the realm of the panopticon, as viewers peer into the world of the film. Audience members serve as willing voyeuristic participants simultaneously observing Jefferies just as he is observing his neighbors. Similarly, the panoptic relationship occurs at the level of Jefferies's rear window and its viewing power into his neighbor's windows. However, our perception of the panopticon vanishes as the visual presence of the rear window fades. When Jefferies reaches for his binoculars or searches through his camera, instantaneously the rear window is no longer visually perceived. Precisely at this moment the perceived situation within cinematic space moves from panopticon to theatre, where each apartment building serves as individual theatres while individual apartments serve as stages. The relationship of suspense within the space is highly linked to the relationship of viewer and viewed within a frame. This is particularly evident when the correlation

²⁸ Jacobs. *The Wrong House: The Architecture of Alfred Hitchcock*. 147.

²⁹ Jacobs. *The Wrong House: The Architecture of Alfred Hitchcock*. 282.

³⁰ Jacobs. *The Wrong House: The Architecture of Alfred Hitchcock*. 282.



Rear Window. Universal, 1954.

flips where the viewer becomes the viewed. Throughout most of the film, the characters within Jefferies's apartment are the viewers while the neighbors are the viewed. When this relationship inverts, or modifies, it marks an intensification of suspense because these moments are typically marked by characters closing the distance and increasing intimacy within the frame and by extension the space. For example, the moment Thorwald enters Jefferies's apartment for the final confrontation the stalker becomes the stalked. Trapped in the miniscule apartment the scene is very claustrophobic as the viewer feels just as trapped within the frame as Jefferies does within the space. As Jefferies is thrown by Thorwald from his own window, the viewer becomes the viewed and the performers become the audience, with the point of view shifting to the courtyard reflecting the change.

FADE OUT TO BLACK

FADE IN:

INT. JEFF'S APARTMENT – DAY – CLOSEUP

ACT III: COLLAGE

JUHANI PALLASMAA

“Architecture exists, like cinema, in the dimension of time and movement. One conceives and reads a building in terms of sequences. To erect a building is to predict and seek effects of contrast and linkage through which one passes... in the continuous shot or sequence that a building is, the architect works with cuts and edits, framings and openings... a depth of field, reading spaces in terms of thickness, hence the super imposition of different screens, planes legible from obligatory joints of passage...”³¹

THE DISSECTION OF a cinematic masterpiece such as *Rear Window*, results in an understanding of the film through individual frames. It can be broken down and understood as a series of still images sequentially understood as a linear narrative. While images can be appreciated individually due to Hitchcock's intense focus on composition within the frame, the montage of images causes the viewer to understand and mentally combine individual images into a sequential and understandable whole whose meaning transcends the independence of a single

³¹ Pallasmaa, Juhani. *The Architecture of Image: Existential Space in Cinema*. 17.



Rear Window. Universal, 1954.

image.³² An essential element in cinema is the passage of time and movement through space. Incorporated into the concept of image is time and temporality. Questioning the traditional notion of an image as a static entity is “to start understanding aesthetic perception as a sequential process.”³³ To understand this is to recognize a sequence of images as suggesting an implied movement through time and space. There are many commonalities between architecture and cinema as spatial constructs but the tangible connection is an individual’s experience of moving through physical architectural space and perceptual cinematic space. In contrast, the largest disparity between cinema and architecture is representation. Cinema is innately dynamic through the camera which captures movement through time and space tangibly. However, architecture is primarily represented through two dimensional static representation. The connection between architecture and cinema in representation can be more directly made by analyzing cinema through still frames, which are more similar to that of a traditional architectural drawing or rendering. When many frames are taken sequentially they instill a cinematic understanding of movement through time and space into an otherwise static image. The same principles may be applied to an architectural drawing thereby creating a bridge between architecture and cinema. In order to make this analytical connection, it is necessary to choose a drawing type able to accommodate both cinematic and architectural influences. Collage, as a drawing type, allows for ambiguity, providing compositional and representational freedom unrestrained by architectural drawing conventions. The direct connection to film occurs in the way each collage can stand alone as an image, similar to a film still, while in sequence they can imply a cinematic progression through time and space.

DEFINITIONS

COLLAGE : a newly created composition of various materials, deploying various techniques, applied to a support.³⁴

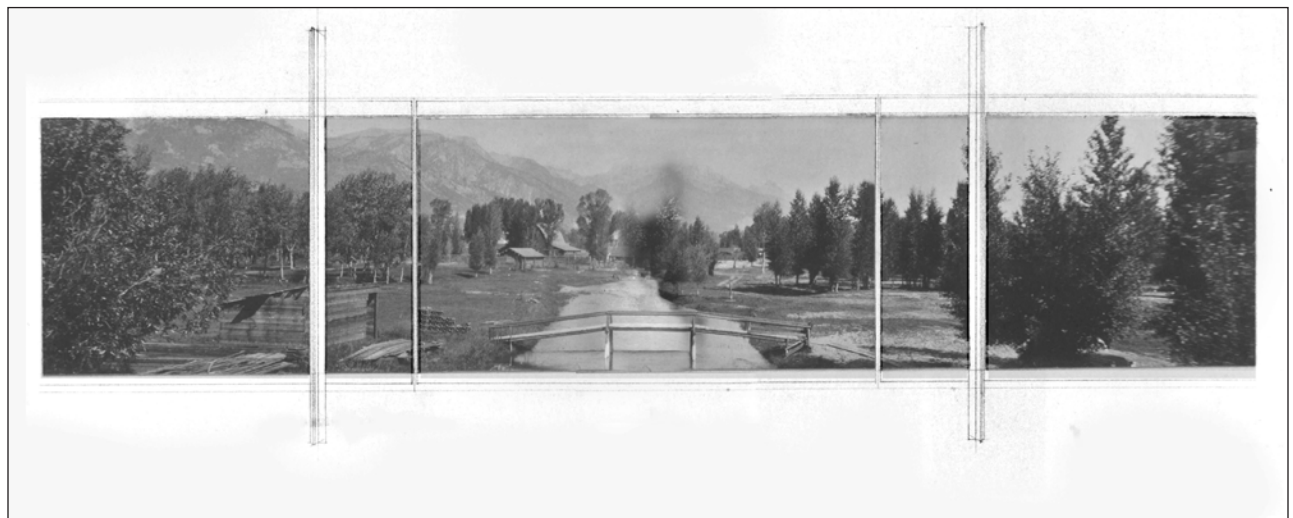
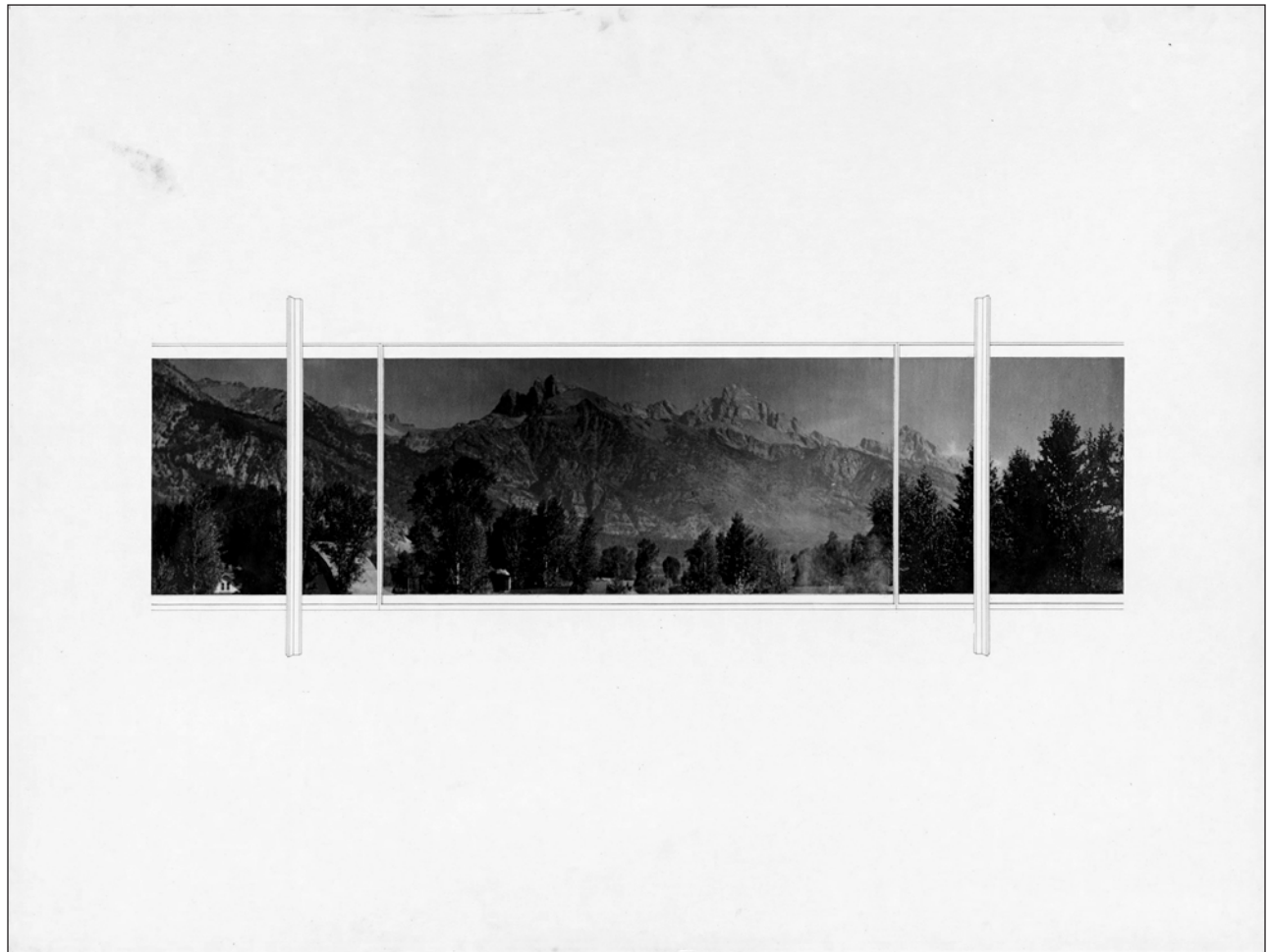
MONTAGE : combination of dissimilar images associated with technical media such as film and photography.³⁵

³² Edwards, Austin. “Angles of Incidence: Film, Mirrors, and Architectural Plot Twists.” In *Lunch 13*, 77–87. (Applied Research and Design Publishing, 2019) 77.

³³ Stierli, Martino. “Mies Montage.” *AA Files*, no. 61 (2010): 54-72. Accessed April 17, 2020. www.jstor.org/stable/29546066.

³⁴ Franzen, Brigitte, Andreas Beitin, Barry Bergdoll, Büchel Lena, and Holger Otten. *Mies Van Der Rohe. Montage. Collage* Ausst. Kat. Ludwigforum Aachen 2016/Museum Georg Schäfer Schweinfurt 2017. Köln: (König, Walther, 2017) 140.

³⁵ Franzen, Andreas, Barry, Büchel, and Holger. *Mies Van Der Rohe. Montage. Collage*. (König, Walther, 2017) 88.



Franzen, Andreas, Barry, Buchell, and Holger, *Mies van der Rohe, Montage, Collage*. (Walther 2017).

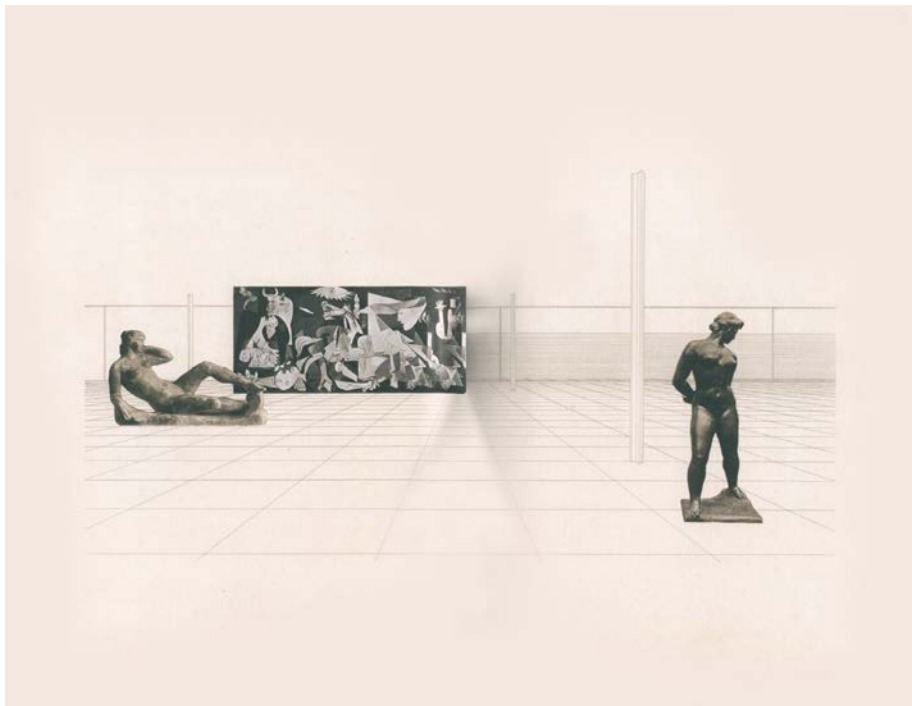
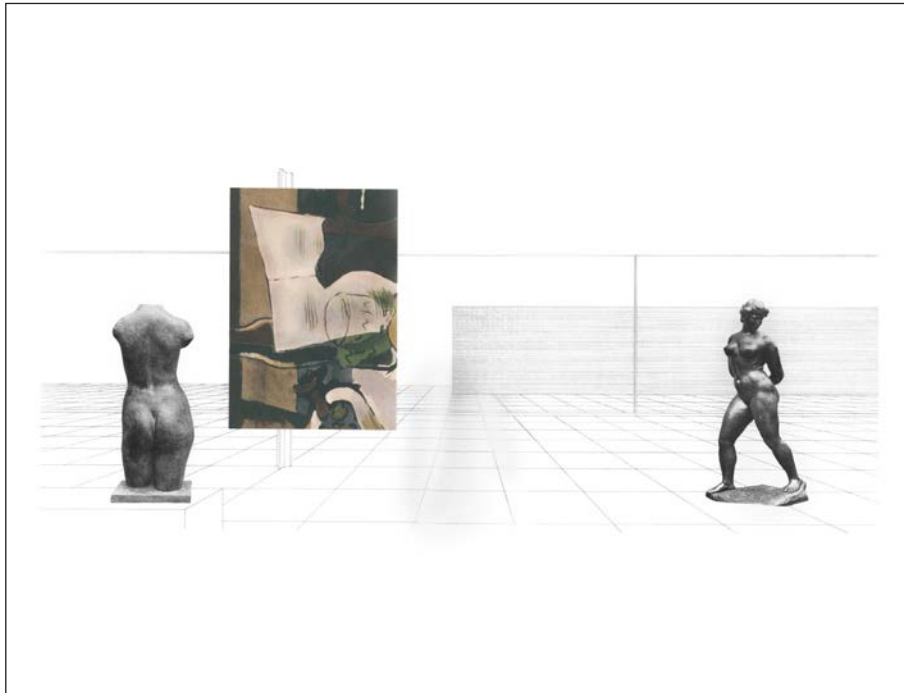
PHOTOMONTAGE : a photograph in which the initial pictorial unity has been altered using photographic techniques or through the insertion of drawings.³⁶

IN ORDER TO UNDERSTAND collages as a drawing type and method of understanding space, Mies van der Rohe became precedent. For Mies, collage was a representational strategy essential to his architectural investigations and are largely overlooked within his complete body of work. Collages and photomontages quickly became a frame of study that, as a design tool, had a direct influence on his architecture and design thinking. Mies viewed collage as a tool to stimulate ideas and foster insight into conceptual space. He would create a series of collages postulating sequences of architectural space.³⁷ Perhaps most indicative of Mies's process through collage is the series of drawings created for the Resor House and the Museum for a Small City. Both spatial investigations were unbuilt but remain robust in their representations. Within the Resor House collages the wall has been transformed into a window, replacing the former domain of opacity into transparency. As a result, the real issue is not the treatment of the interior space but rather the relationship between interior and exterior space. The landscape becomes integral and dominant in the design. This representation of the Resor House results in a flattened perception of space, as if the individual were looking at a painting rather than a view of a landscape, therefore deleting the foreground and with it any indication of spatial depth. This series of collages exists with two iterations contained in different landscapes. Within the desert iteration, distance is fundamental, detaching the individual from the life of the landscape rendering them powerless, unable to engage the view in any way other than observation. The landscape becomes an object within the space, a painting, the "subject of aesthetic consumption," an object within a flat planar space. The landscape depicted in the Resor House collages has no relationship to the architectural environment. The scene was cut from a movie poster, aestheticizing the view, showing Mies's use of cinema to create an illusion of space through the removal of context.³⁸ As a result, it is evident through these photocollages that the focus was not necessarily the configuration of interior space but rather the ability to condition interior space to intentionally frame the exterior, regardless of context. It further displays that abstract interior space has the ability to abstract and remove the individual from the exterior view transforming it into an aesthetic element inhabiting interior space. For example, when architecture becomes a frame for the landscape, visually the

³⁶ Franzen, Andreas, Barry, Büchel, and Holger. *Mies Van Der Rohe. Montage. Collage.* (König, Walther, 2017) 140.

³⁷ Franzen, Andreas, Barry, Büchel, and Holger. *Mies Van Der Rohe. Montage. Collage.* (König, Walther, 2017) 12.

³⁸ Franzen, Andreas, Barry, Büchel, and Holger. *Mies Van Der Rohe. Montage. Collage.* (König, Walther, 2017) 132.



Franzen, Andreas, Barry, Buchell, and Holger, *Mies van der Rohe, Montage, Collage*. (Walther 2017).

landscape takes on the quality of the image. The exterior view is flattened to a 2-dimensional plane.³⁹ In contrast to the flatness and depthlessness of the Resor House's collages, the Museum for a Small City's collages are most notably characterized by a base grid providing a more tangible representation of space through the insistence on one point perspective. Throughout Mies's career he refused to represent his architecture through techniques such as axonometric drawings, preferring instead conical perspective. Mies conceived architectural space as a visual medium, perceived by the eye as static rather than flowing. These qualities are particularly evident within the Museum for a Small City. Each collage acts as a static snapshot of space, postulating potential organization while mimicking how the space might physically be perceived. The intention behind the insistence of the one point perspective is ultimately to construct a mechanism within the drawing that suggests virtual depth.⁴⁰

AUSTIN EDWARDS

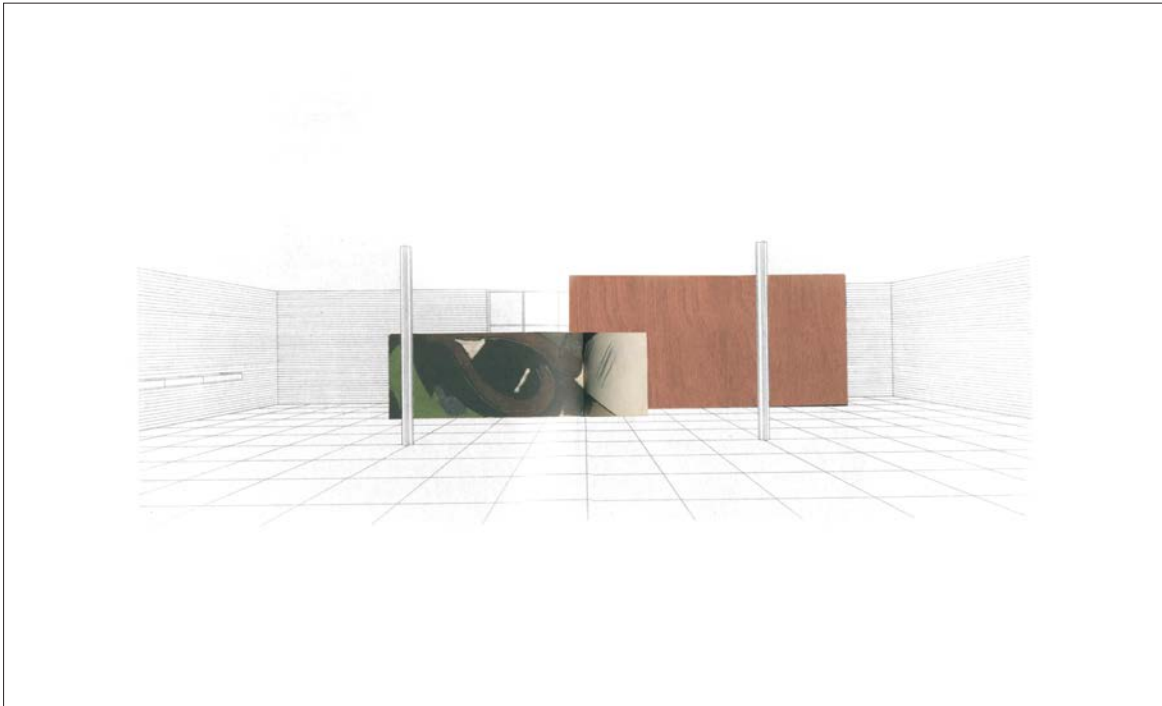
"The margin between the frames and lack of actual motion does not hinder the conception of action of the time-rate change of that action... still images form an idea of motion. That does not hinder the conception of action or the time-rate change of the action. Images form an idea of action."⁴¹

MIES CONCEIVES OF SPACE as experienced and perceived by the eye as flattened, not shifting and fluid. This idea is translated through his collage investigations. Breaking down *Rear Window* into a series of 2-dimensional frames transforms the film into a series of static images. Those images when understood sequentially imply progression of time and space through the film's narrative. This mode of analysis provides common ground for cinema and architecture, allowing both to exist on a 2-dimensional plane. Collage as a medium for analysis represents space as flattened, developing dimension and implying depth. With both cinema and architecture existing in a 2-dimensional form collage provides the vehicle for analysis. Collage as a drawing type and compositional exercise provides the blank slate necessary to represent elements of *Rear Window* removed from their original contexts and investigate Hitchcock's methods of suspenseful space making. While each collage can exist as an individual image, developing a sequence constructs a cinematic understanding of space, just as *Rear Window* can be understood through a series of

³⁹ Franzen, Andreas, Barry, Büchel, and Holger. *Mies Van Der Rohe. Montage. Collage.* (König, Walther, 2017) 132.

⁴⁰ Franzen, Andreas, Barry, Büchel, and Holger. *Mies Van Der Rohe. Montage. Collage.* (König, Walther, 2017) 132.

⁴¹ Edwards, Austin. "Angles of Incidence: Film, Mirrors, and Architectural Plot Twists." In *Lunch 13*, 77–87. (Applied Research and Design Publishing, 2019) 77.



Franzen, Andreas, Barry, Buchell, and Holger, *Mies van der Rohe, Montage, Collage*. (Walther 2017), 117.

Two planes placed within the space, one of wood veneer the other a reproduction of Georges Braque's *Still Life with Brown Pitcher*, prevent a complete understanding of space. Even with the grid defining the ground plane the relationship between the two elements is ambiguous. Their placement implies separation, interstitial space but because of the ambiguity the planes could also be touching.

frames. Sequential frames combine an architectural conception of space and a cinematic development of time and space. By breaking down *Rear Window* into a progression of collages, suspense is investigated through the shifting conditions perceived in the series of collages. If each collage changes composition through planes and arrangement of characters within space it implies a cinematic progression of narrative while representing shifting architectural conditions mimicking the shifting view or focus of the camera. The progression of collages represents a building of suspense mirroring the pacing of Hitchcock's narrative. Architecturally this process mimics how architects can conceive of a progression of spaces an individual might encounter. The shifting composition implies a shifting point of view or an iterative investigation of space making. These conditions facilitate an investigation of suspense through the re-presenting of Hitchcock's architectural elements in *Rear Window*. This allows the essence of the scenes to be explicit, representing a way that postulates how these elements can exist within a singular architectural space.

FADE IN :

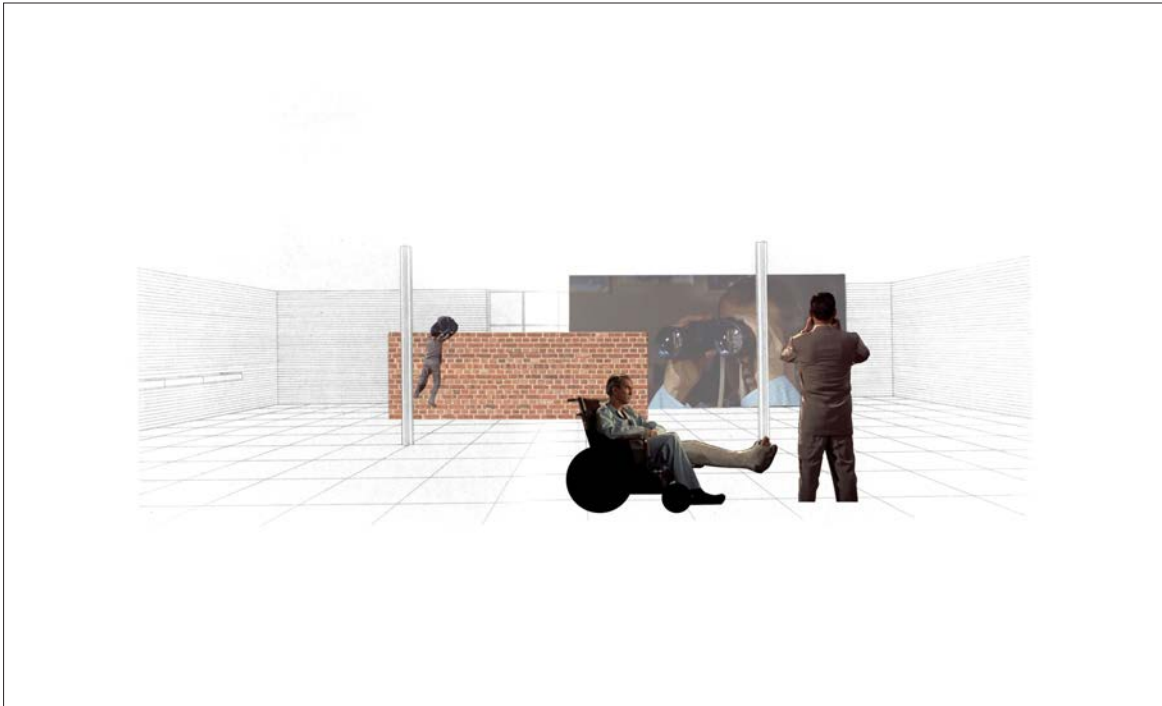
EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD – DAY – LONG SHOT⁴²

ACT IV : METHOD OF INVESTIGATION

SCENE I : OVERALL PROCESS

FILM HAS THE ABILITY to evoke powerful emotional reactions from its audience through the emotional atmosphere it creates. This almost intangible quality is difficult to quantitatively describe. Architecture, to the learned few, has a similar ability to evoke emotional reactions to the spatial atmosphere it creates. Moving through a historic city such as Rome you are constantly confronted with historical monuments meant to render its spectators diminutive and insignificant. The serendipitous experience develops a sense of uncertainty about what lies around the next corner, representing a suspenseful experience of moving through space. Therefore, the intangible emotional quality of cinema is also heavily present in the experience of architecture. Broadly, the goal of this research is to investigate the emotional influence of suspense in cinematic space and how it might quantitatively be described through a series of definable principals or space making strategies evident through an analysis of *Rear Window*. The medium of film allows space to be released from the physical realities architecture is bound to. Observing suspense in space solely through the medium of film, the term is allowed to maintain a more ephemeral or emotional connotation. Only by seeing cinema through the lens of an architect can the physical manifestations of suspense in space be observed. An architect's understanding of space allows *Rear Window* to be understood as an

⁴² Hayes, John Michael. *Rear Window*. Film Script. 1953.



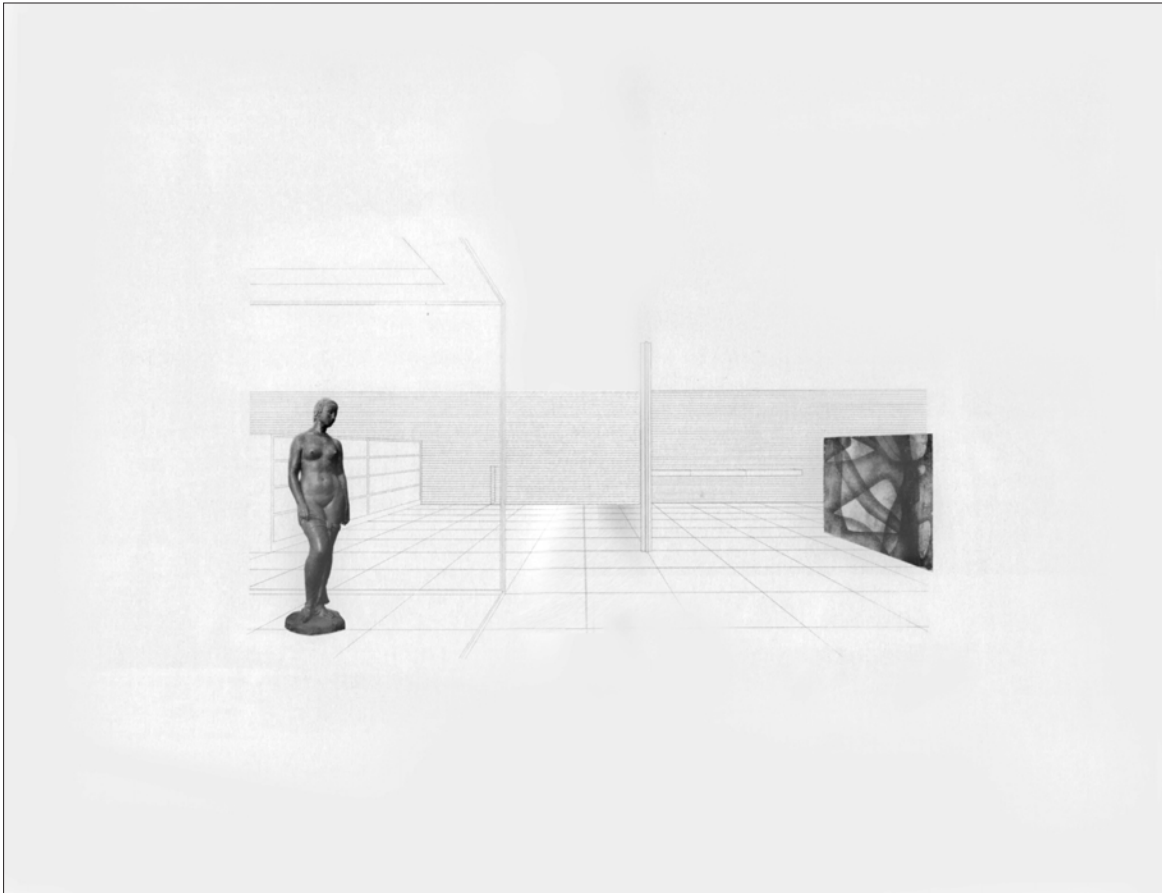
Franzen, Andreas, Barry, Buchell, and Holger, *Mies van der Rohe, Montage, Collage*. (Walther 2017), 117.
Rear Window. Universal, 1954.

The grid within the original collage implies depth, providing a perceived distance between characters. The two planes placed in space are animated with scenes from *Rear Window*. Distance between the characters contributes to a feeling of helplessness. Jefferies and the cop in the foreground of the collage are only able to watch as another representation of Jefferies hangs from a brick wall in the background. The ambiguous relationship between the planes remains as their placement in space remains unclear.

architectural construction spatially facilitating suspense through Hitchcock's direction. In contrast to a director, an architect cannot fully control the view and experience of an individual moving through space as a director controls a camera. However, the architect can use space to facilitate an experience. In a sense the architect acts as director, facilitating the arrangement of space by implying a particular sequence to facilitate an impactful development, in this case, of suspense. Within the field of architecture the idea of suspense can potentially permeate many aspects of space making. Embedded in each project lies the decision of how to guide people through a space. For instance, that guidance can render a space suspenseful by developing ambiguity between the relationships of individual spaces to the whole. The clarity of space, or lack thereof, can influence an individual's perception and therefore their experience. This cinematic idea of facilitating emotion in film, and developing it quantitatively through space making is a powerful tool at an architect's disposal.

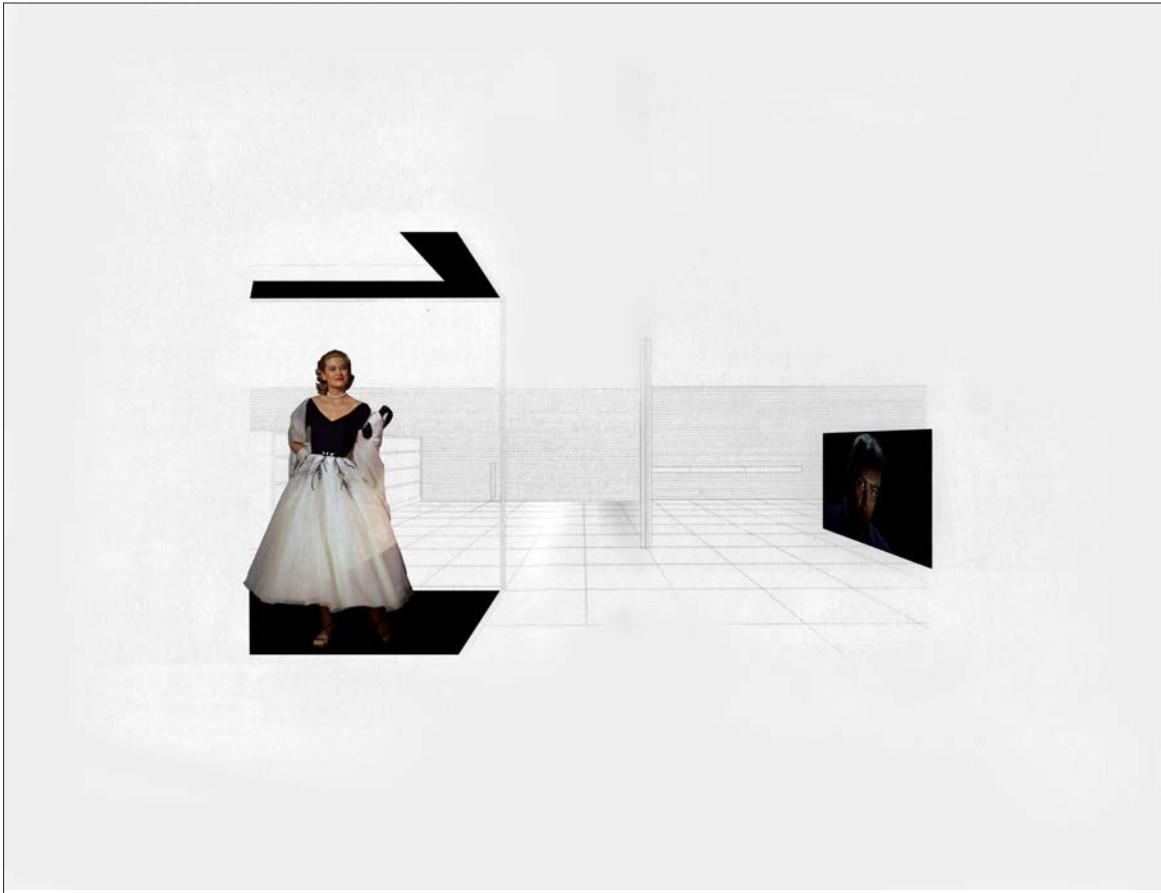
SCENE II : INVESTIGATIVE COLLAGES

IN ORDER TO USE COLLAGE as a tool and medium of investigation throughout the process required a strategy of composition and representation. Using Mies van der Rohe as a precedent for the method of collage making provided a specific direction and style of composition for investigating collages throughout the process. In order to more fully grasp Mies's collage investigations as a tool of analyzing suspense in *Rear Window*, a series of collages were developed by taking Mies's original collages, overlaying elements, and characters from Hitchcock's film *Rear Window* reimagining the original composition. This process developed an understanding of both Mies's collages and Hitchcock's *Rear Window*. Mies's collages seemed to be embedded with tension, by animating them with Hitchcock's characters it brought suspense to life. Tension in the precedent collages is evident through the relationship between elements within the frame. For instance, the paintings, enlarged and used as partitions, either overlap or nearly overlap. Their relationship within space is ambiguous as it is frequently unclear which is place in the foreground and which in the background. The overlapping planes imply interstitial space. However, ambiguity exists because it is impossible to know the characteristics of the planes or whether interstitial space even exists. By inserting elements of *Rear Window* into the pre-existing collages created an understanding of how suspense is developed through the relationship between architectural elements and film characters. Mies's collages provided the framework for reinterpreting the relationship between characters and architectural elements from *Rear Window*. Each iteration explored how to encapsulate the entirety of the film into one compositional frame. This process also fostered a deeper understanding of *Rear Window* through the isolation of characters and events in the new composition. It focused the analysis on elements and events significant to the overall narrative and the development of suspense.



Franzen, Andreas, Barry, Buchell, and Holger, *Mies van der Rohe, Montage, Collage*. (Walther 2017), 119.

In contrast to many of Mies's collages, the space depicted above is more highly articulated. The horizon and depth of space is clearly defined by what appears to be a brick wall. A grid defining the ground plane provides context for how elements are situated within the space. The presence of columns and mullions implies a differentiation between interior and exterior space, however the lack of ceiling articulation creates ambiguity. The singular statue seems to be encased within a glass volume, gazing longingly into a reproduction of Paul Klee's *Rainy Day*. The statue and the painting fragment serve to animate the space and provide a sense of scale. Tension is created by the physical distance placed between the elements, and the gaze of the statue.



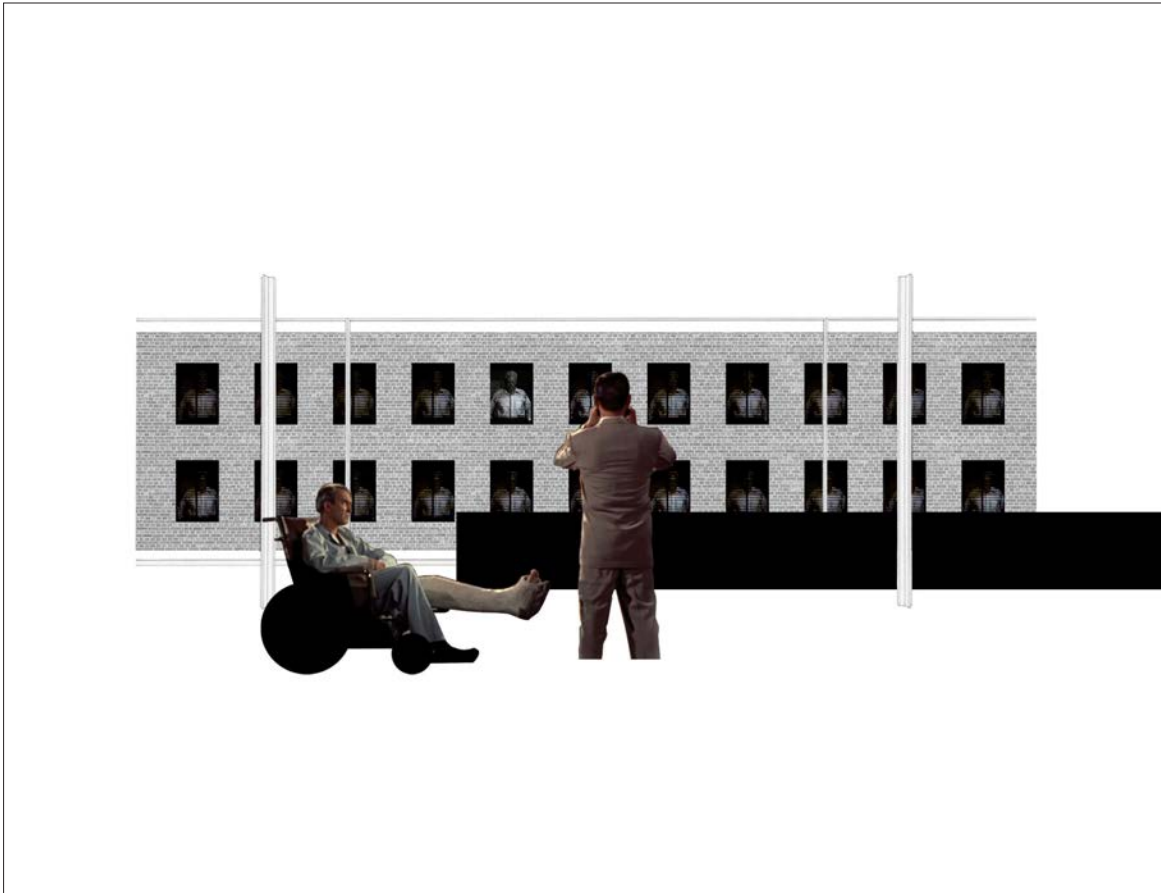
Franzen, Andreas, Barry, Buchell, and Holger, *Mies van der Rohe, Montage, Collage*. (Walther 2017), 119.
Rear Window. Universal, 1954.

The reproduced collage is animated by an image of Lisa and a frame of Thorwald in *Rear Window*, replacing the statue and painting fragment. Tension between the two original elements is re-presented through Lisa and Thorwald. Lisa conveys a false sense of security appearing comfortable within her glass volume, unaware of the threatening presence of Thorwald behind her. Suspense is portrayed through the implied connection between the characters created through Thorwald's gaze. Although there is distance placed between the characters Thorwald's gaze implies sinister intent.



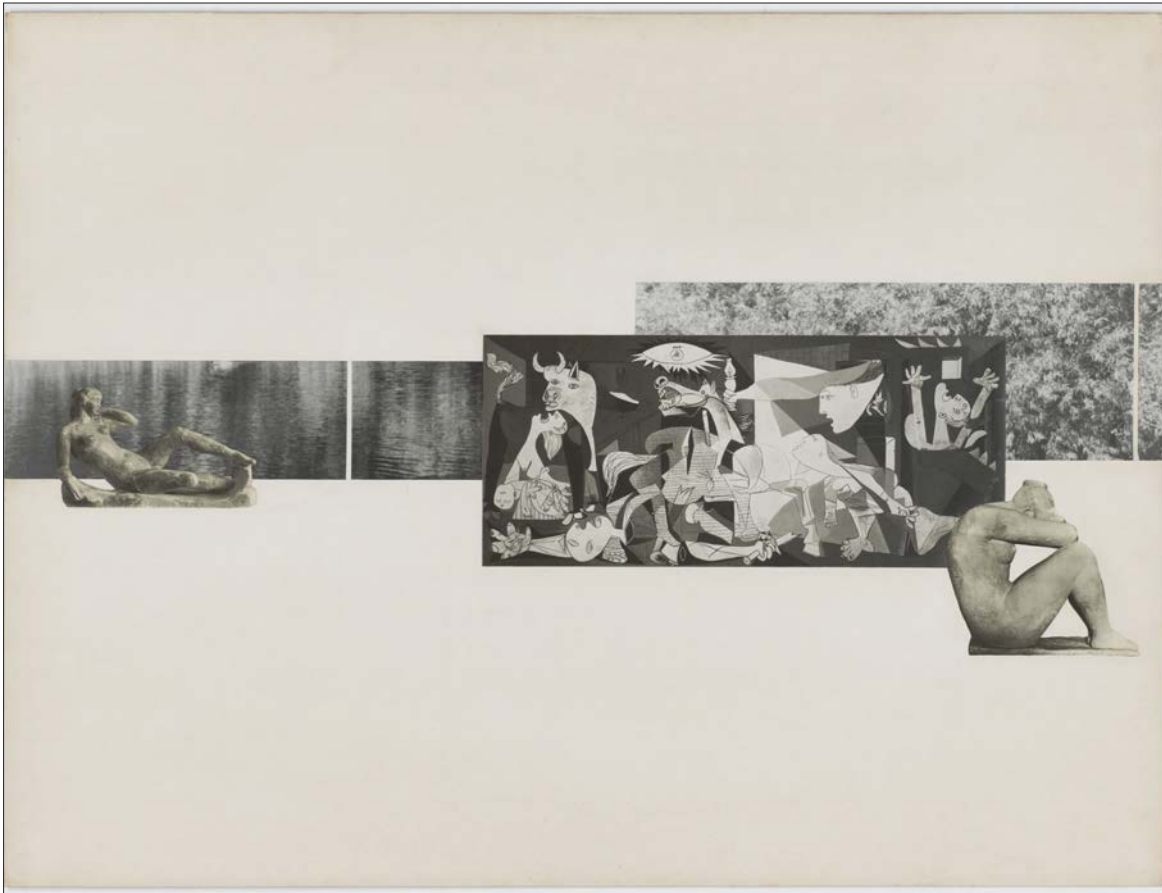
Franzen, Andreas, Barry, Buchell, and Holger, *Mies van der Rohe*,
Montage, Collage. (Walther 2017), 123.

The lack of articulation within the interior space renders the collage flat and planar. Without the use of a grid to represent the ground plane it is difficult to perceive the depth of space. This flattened depiction of space transforms the image of the Teton Range into a 2-dimensional element in space. Instead of a view onto a mountain range the window is turned into a planar element defining space within the collage.



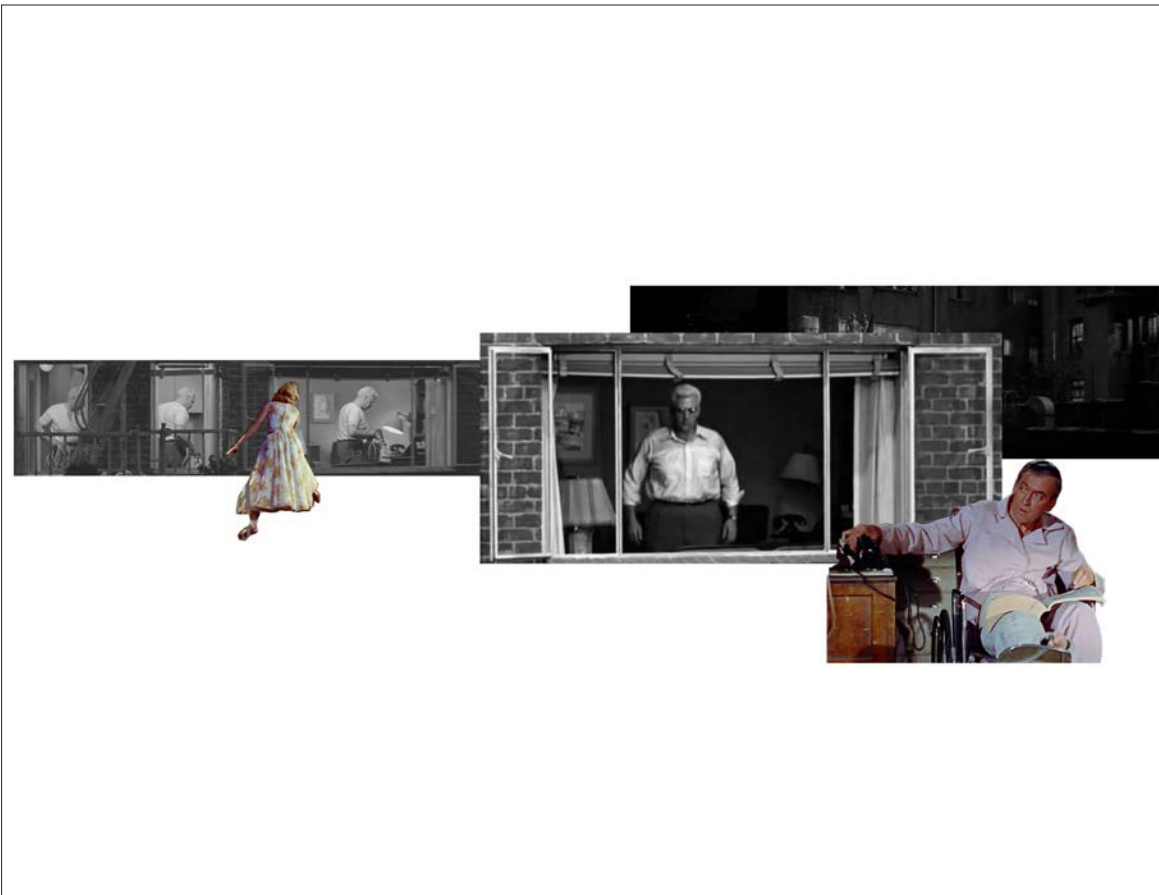
Franzen, Andreas, Barry, Buchell, and Holger, *Mies van der Rohe, Montage, Collage*. (Walther 2017), 123.
Rear Window. Universal, 1954.

In the *Rear Window* reproduction the image of the Teton Range is replaced by a brick wall populated by windows inhabited by the foreboding silhouette of Thorwald. Jefferies and the cop appear in the foreground observing Thorwald, their placement creating a perception of depth in the collage. Thorwald's silhouette is repeated with varying degrees of clarity, his figure obscured by blinds. This repetition portrays the uncertainty and ambiguity felt by the characters throughout the film.



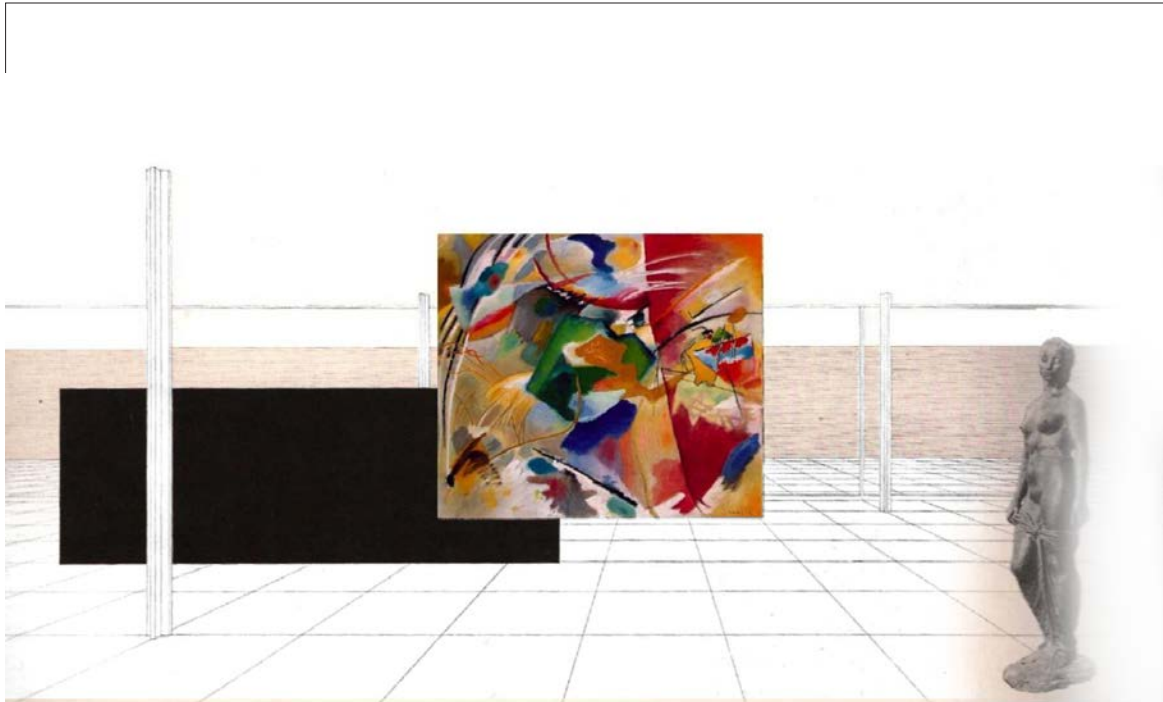
Franzen, Andreas, Barry, Buchell, and Holger, *Mies van der Rohe, Montage, Collage*. (Walther 2017), 159.

Space within this collage is entirely implied through the arrangement of planes within space. Several of the planes consist of landscape elements suggesting windows. However, the flatness of the collage transforms the suggestion of view into a static image. An element placed in space, just as the painting in the foreground suggests. The relationship between the planes is unclear and tenuous implying interstitial space but ambiguous in its manifestation. The only implication of depth or scale is provided through the placement of two statues. The difference in scale suggests perspectival space.



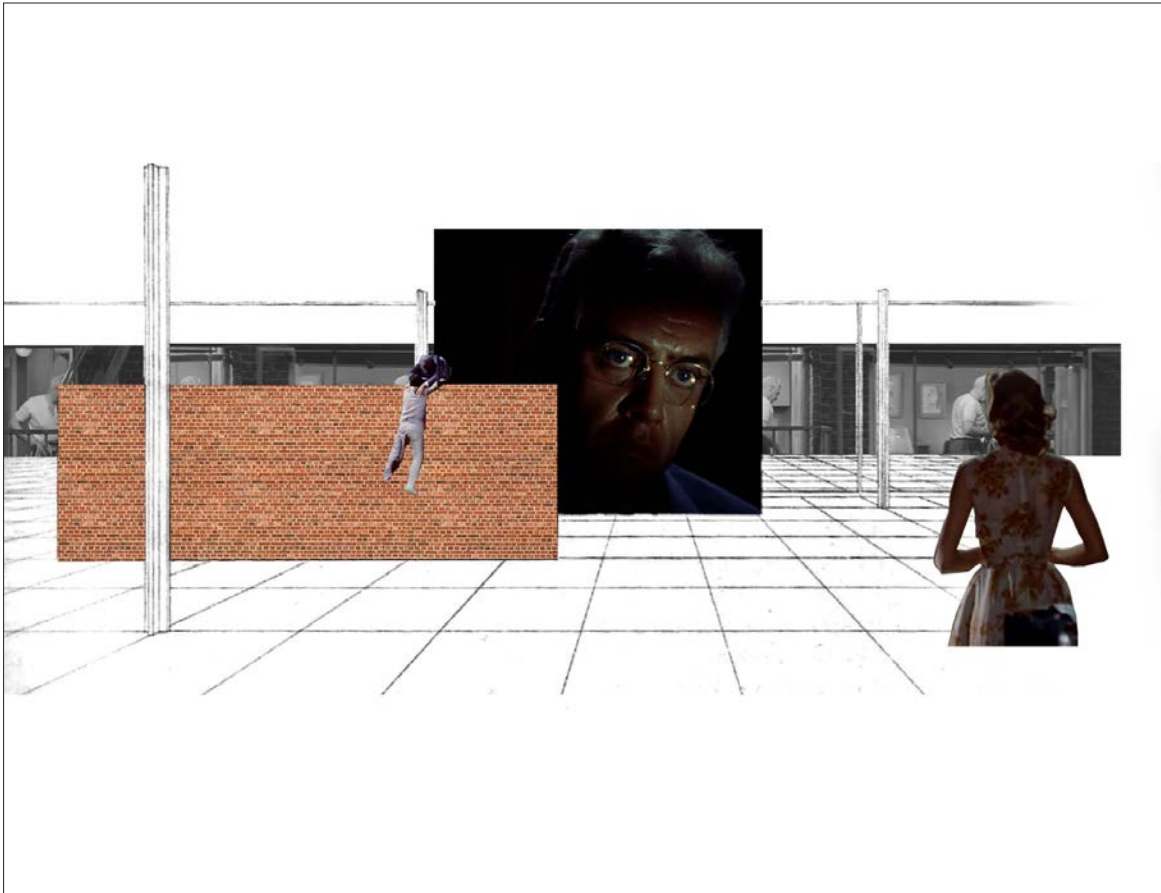
Franzen, Andreas, Barry, Buchell, and Holger, *Mies van der Rohe, Montage, Collage*. (Walther 2017), 159.
Rear Window. Universal, 1954.

This reproduction provides the most clear example of attempting to fully summarize *Rear Window* within a single drawing. The planar elements within the original collage serve as canvases for *Rear Window* scenes. The statues are also replaced with the figures of Jefferies and Lisa. Their presence serves to provide scale and imply depth, just as the statues provided in the original collage. With the addition of Thorwald and his chilling gaze, the characters animate the space creating a sense of unease and uncertainty. Lisa precariously balances on a ledge while Thorwald gazes threateningly at Jefferies. The collage remains in tension with each character waiting in anticipation for events to unfold.



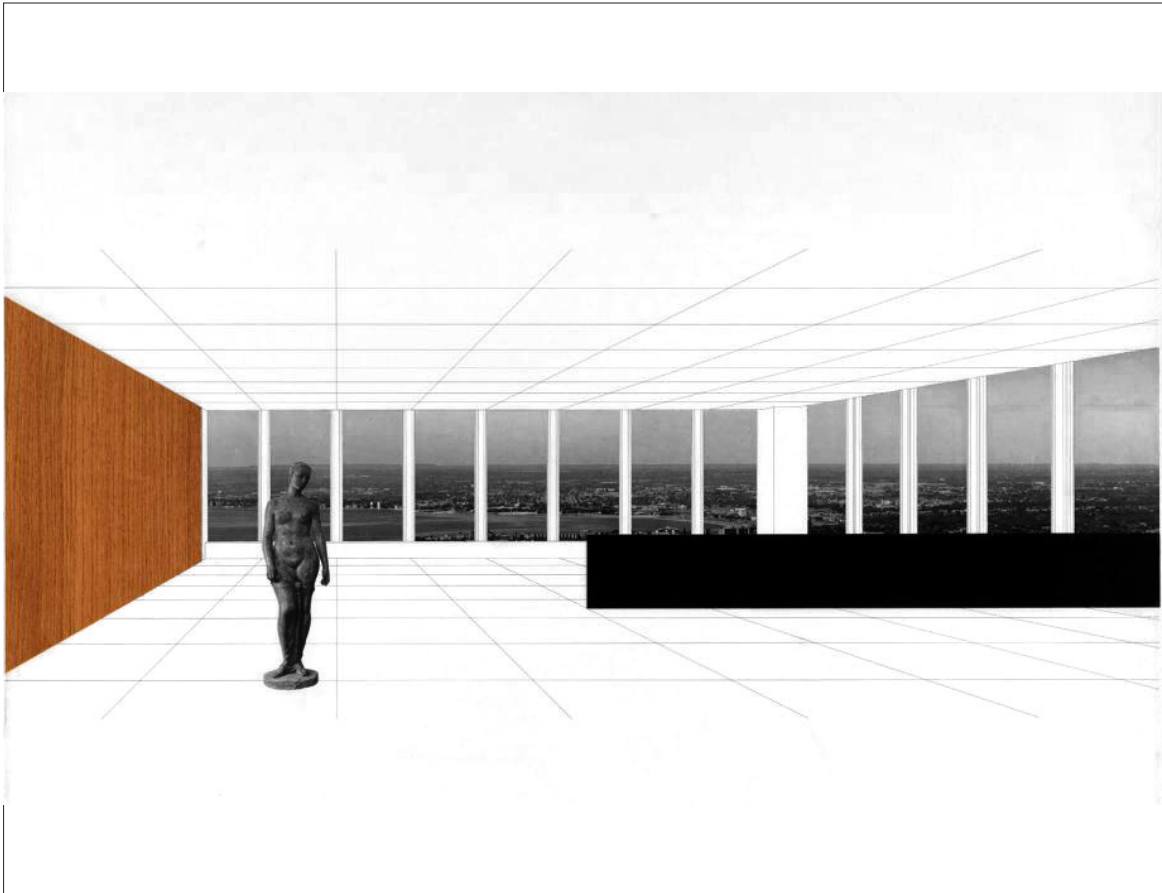
Franzen, Andreas, Barry, Buchell, and Holger, *Mies van der Rohe, Montage, Collage*. (Walther 2017), 153.

The painting fragment and horizontal black plane interact in a unique way in this collage. Instead of implying interstitial space the reproduction of Wassily Kandinsky's *Painting with White Form* appears to be using the black element as structure to hang from. The statue provides a reference for scale and a brick wall at the horizon line defines the depth of the space.



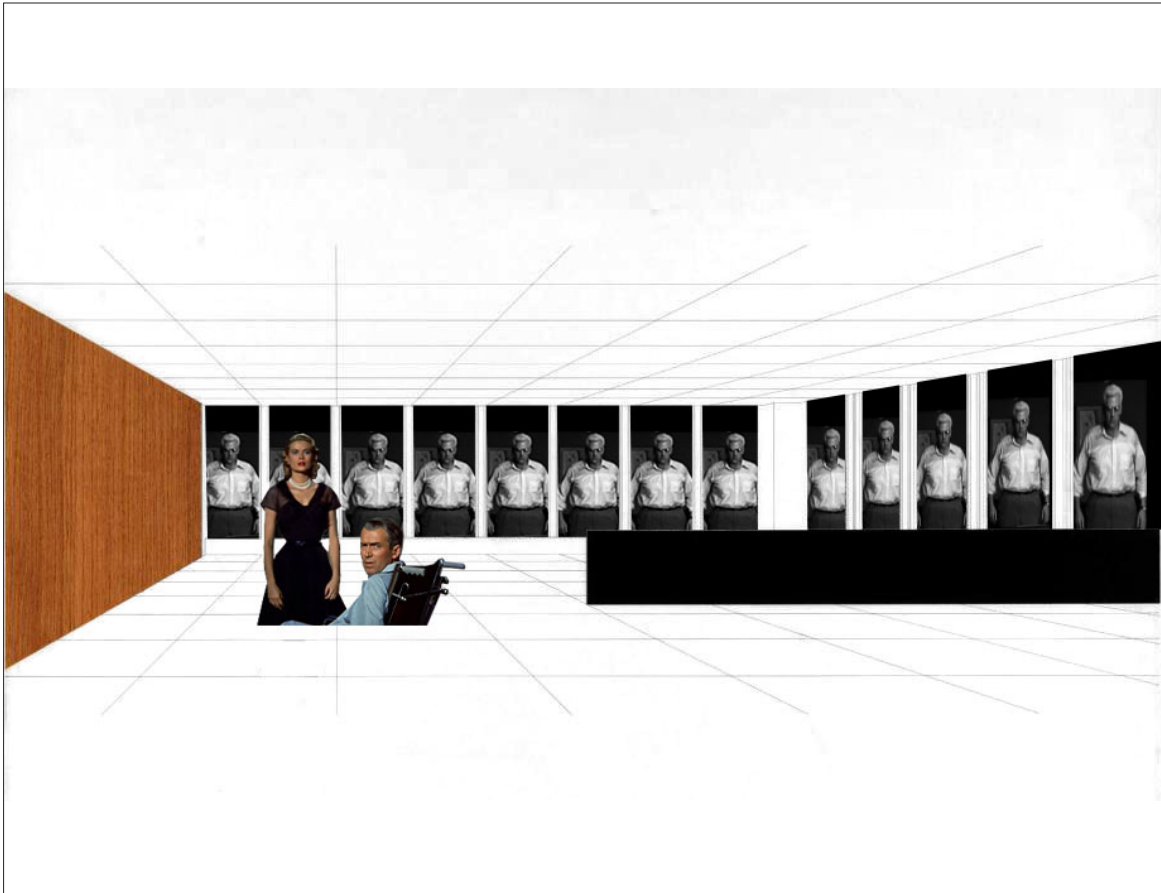
Franzen, Andreas, Barry, Buchell, and Holger, *Mies van der Rohe, Montage, Collage*. (Walther 2017), 153.
Rear Window. Universal, 1954.

Replacing the statue with the figure of Lisa turns the collage form a composition of space to a scene unfolding before an audience. The characters imply a series of events and serve to represent the film as a whole. By turning the black plane into a representation of a brick wall and placing it before an image of Thorwald it readjusts the composition bringing the brick wall into the foreground. This change implies separation between the brick wall and image of Thorwald implying distance between the characters and events.



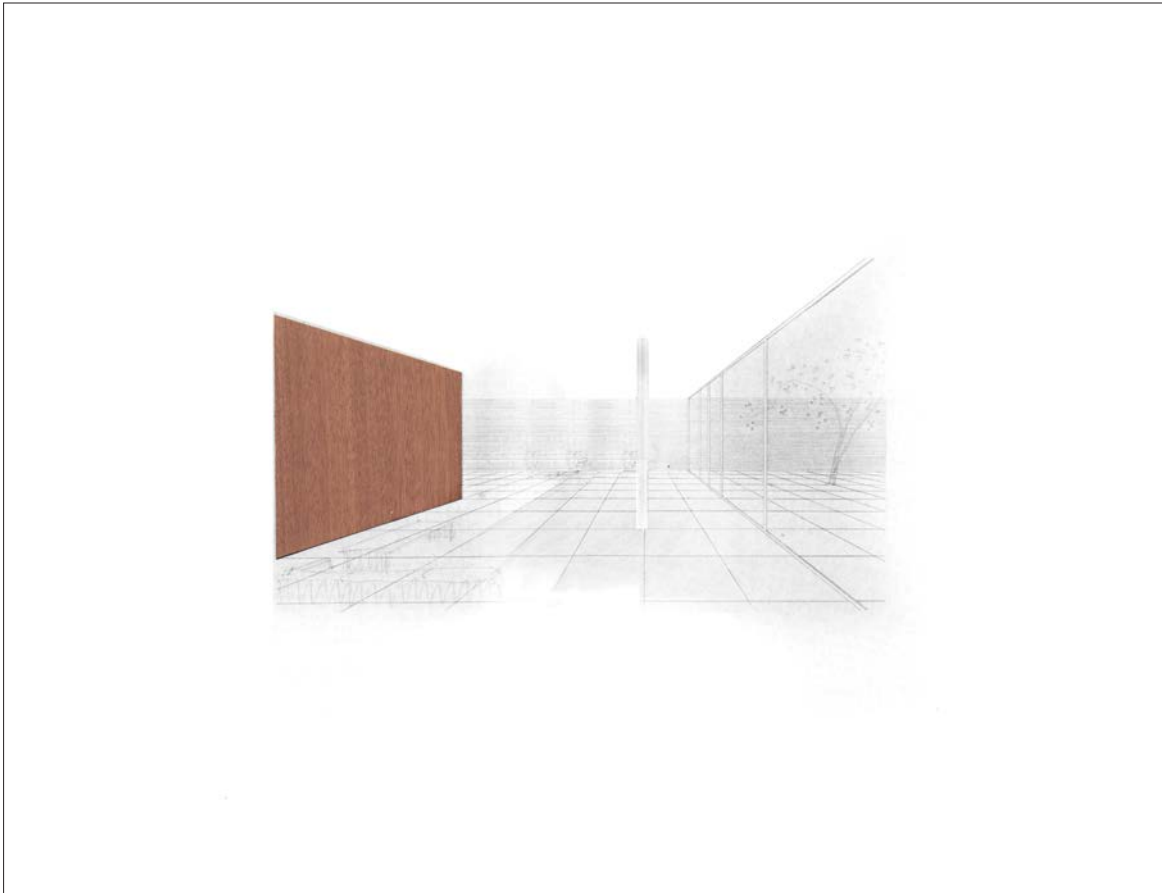
Franzen, Andreas, Barry, Buchell, and Holger, *Mies van der Rohe, Montage, Collage*. (Walther 2017), 219.

This collage represents a shift in Mies van der Rohe's compositions. The vanishing point is shifted to the left with Wilhelm Lehmbruck's *Standing Female* central to the composition. Instead of the space facing towards a window, the space is surrounded by windows lining the perimeter. The space becomes an outlook onto a landscape as opposed to the flatness of previous collages rendering the landscape a planar image within the space.



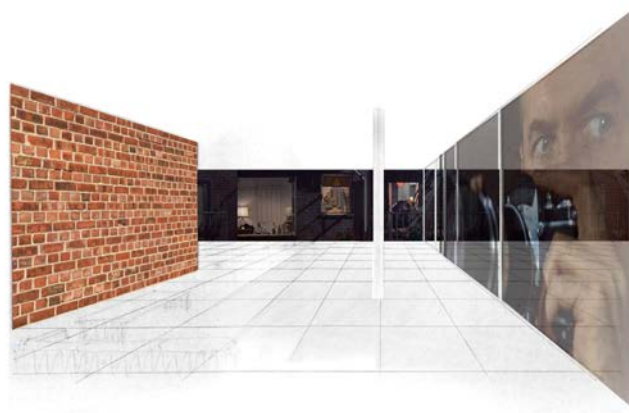
Franzen, Andreas, Barry, Buchell, and Holger, *Mies van der Rohe, Montage, Collage*. (Walther 2017), 219.
Rear Window. Universal, 1954.

Just as Mies transformed the composition of space in the original collage, Hitchcock transforms the viewer's understanding of space as the film progresses. The change in collage composition facilitates a representation of the moment in *Rear Window* where the viewer becomes the viewed. Throughout the film Jefferies had been observing Thorwald without his knowledge, however when Thorwald discovers Jefferies spying the relationship is reversed. Jefferies becomes the one being stalked. Thorwald surrounds Jefferies and Lisa representing an unavoidable threat and inevitable confrontation as a result of Jefferies's voyeuristic game.



Franzen, Andreas, Barry, Buchell, and Holger, *Mies van der Rohe, Montage, Collage*. (Walther 2017), 105.

The central figure of this collage is a single column implying a ceiling plane not clearly articulated. the only indication of division between interior and exterior space is what appear to be a glass curtain wall. Ambiguity between interior and exterior space is emphasized by the continuous wall defining the depth of the space reaching beyond the confines of the glass curtain wall.



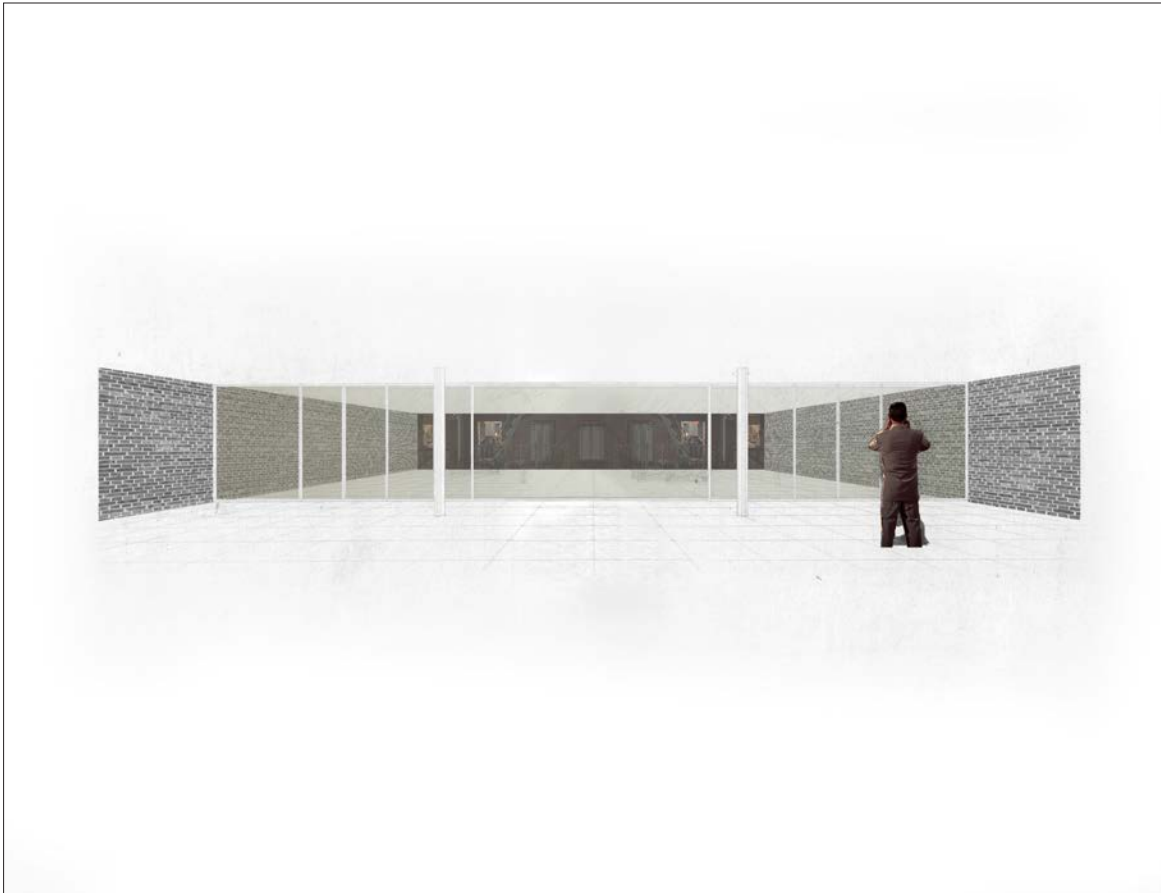
Franzen, Andreas, Barry, Buchell, and Holger, *Mies van der Rohe, Montage, Collage*. (Walther 2017), 105.
Rear Window. Universal, 1954.

The emphasis of the collage is transformed by the introduction of characters from *Rear Window*. An image of Thorwald moving through his apartment replaces the blank wall and a translucent image of Jefferies inhabits the glass curtain wall dividing the space. The space containing Thorwald continues past the translucent image of Jefferies contributing to the ambiguous development of space in the original collage. Delineation between interior and exterior space remains unclear as the glass and brick walls imply interior space but lack of a ceiling plane maintains ambiguity.



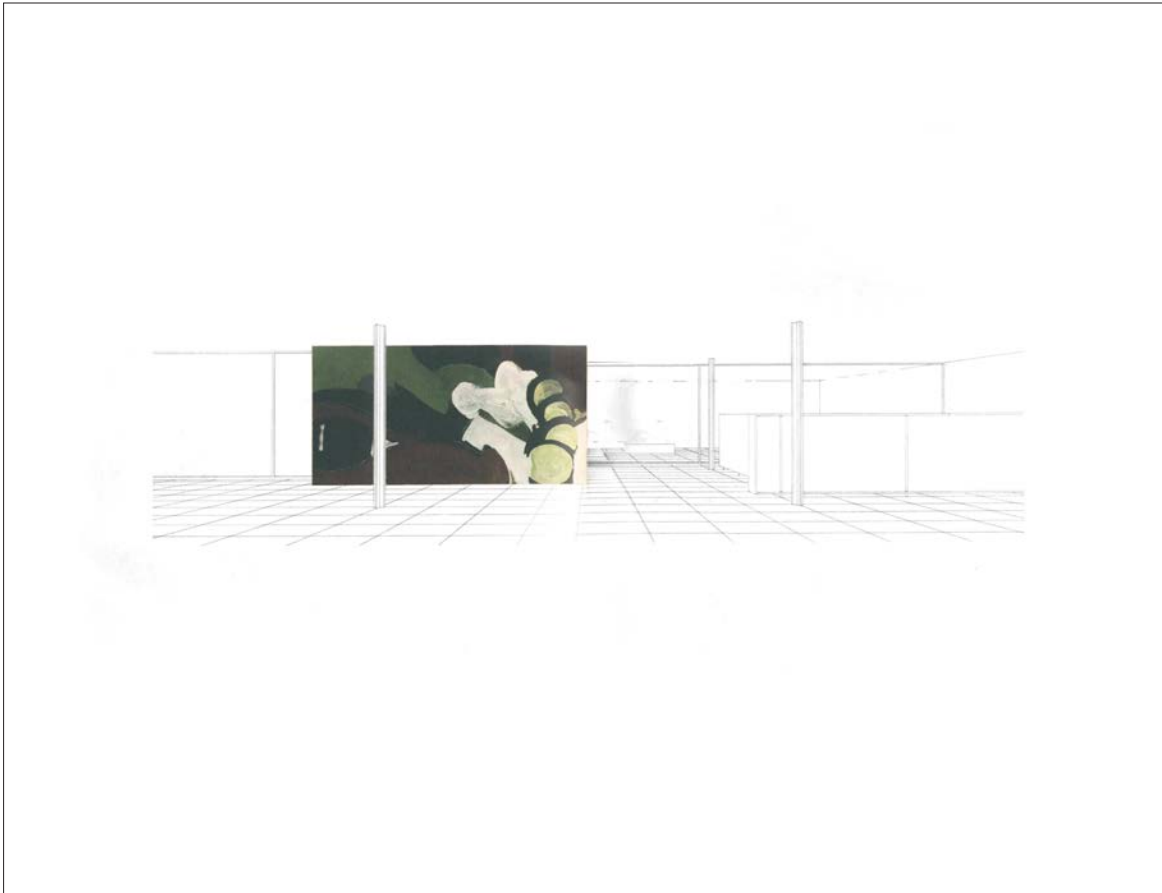
Franzen, Andreas, Barry, Buchell, and Holger, *Mies van der Rohe, Montage, Collage*. (Walther 2017), 107.

The ambiguous relationship between interior and exterior space is continued in the collage depicted above. The lack of articulation in the ceiling plane makes it disappear or imply its indefinite continuation. The presence of a ceiling is only implied through the presences of columns and a glass partition dividing the space. Absence of a ceiling plane is only suggested through the faint sketch of trees in the space that appears to be a courtyard. A brick wall enclosing the space provides a clear boundary, defining finite borders. The uniform line weight and tone of the drawing flattens the composition.



Franzen, Andreas, Barry, Buchell, and Holger, *Mies van der Rohe, Montage, Collage*. (Walther 2017), 107.
Rear Window. Universal, 1954.

The collage above, repopulated by elements of *Rear Window*, utilizes the defined boundary walls to focus the composition on the far back wall. Saturated images from the film transform the collage exaggerating the depth of space. A character in the foreground of the collage is observing Thorwald through the glass wall. The partition's presence is emphasized through tone, clearly articulating distance between the character in the foreground and Thorwald's apartment.



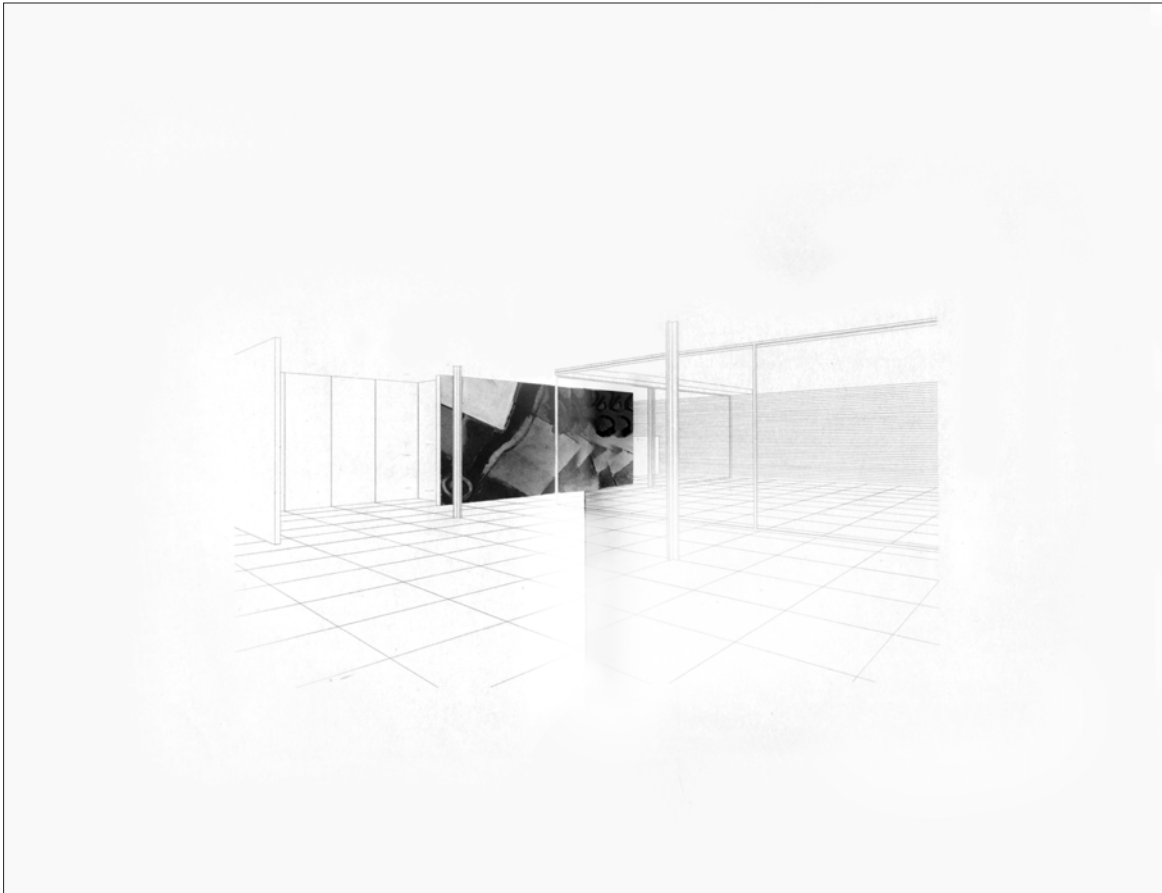
Franzen, Andreas, Barry, Buchell, and Holger, *Mies van der Rohe, Montage, Collage*. (Walther 2017), 111.

A fragment of Georges Braque's *Still Life* is the most prominent element within the collage. The grid articulating the ground plane contributes to a perception of depth. The glass curtain wall appears to be broken with one segment shifted forward in the composition as opposed to an unbroken horizontal element present in most of Mies's collages. That shift implies the courtyard beyond the painting is situated the most deeply in space with lightly drawn vegetation delineating interior and exterior space. However, the painting obscures a full understanding of the space.



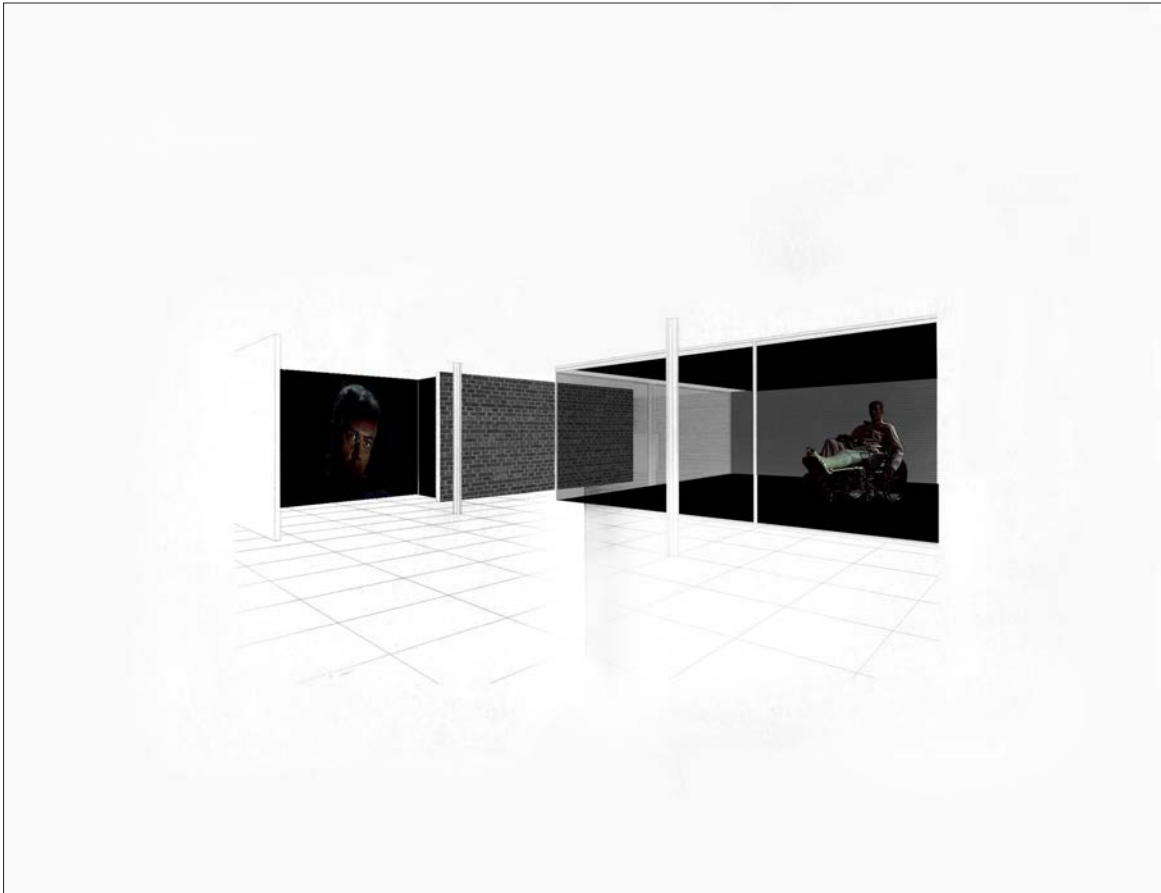
Franzen, Andreas, Barry, Buchell, and Holger, *Mies van der Rohe, Montage, Collage*. (Walther 2017), 111.
Rear Window. Universal, 1954.

The surfaces previously unarticulated in the reproduction are populated by elements from *Rear Window*. Mies's placement of planes within space facilitate a feeling of suspense between the characters. The painting, transformed into a brick wall maintains ambiguity of space and facilitates separation between characters. Tension between characters is developed through distance. Thorwald and Jefferies gaze towards each other but as they are not situated on the same plane it is unclear if the characters are aware of each other's presence. This emphasizes an unclear connection between Thorwald and Jefferies spatially creating uncertainty as to what might happen.



Franzen, Andreas, Barry, Buchell, and Holger, *Mies van der Rohe, Montage, Collage*. (Walther 2017), 113.

This collage represents a clear departure from Mies's other compositions. The perspective is situated against the direction of the grid lines on the ground plane. A glass curtain wall encloses what appears to be exterior space. Columns are the only elements present to imply a ceiling plane. Once again a fragment of a painting serves as the focal point of the collage. Space is implied to continue past the painting disappearing around the corner. Images such as paintings, textures or statues are the only references to inhabitation or scale in many of Mies's collage.



Franzen, Andreas, Barry, Buchell, and Holger, *Mies van der Rohe, Montage, Collage*. (Walther 2017), 113.
Rear Window. Universal, 1954.

In the *Rear Window* reproduction, Jefferies is contained within the darkened glass curtain wall enclosure. Thorwald's foreboding gaze develops a sense of danger for Jefferies trapped within a claustrophobic space. The brick wall facilitates an implied physical distance between the characters. Each character inhabits a space, Thorwald inhabiting a plane whereas Jefferies inhabits a volume. This mimics the viewer's perception of *Rear Window*. Jefferies's apartment is understood as a volume of space while his neighbor's apartments are flattened into images, or views into private worlds.



Rear Window. Universal, 1954.

IN ADDITION TO providing a better understanding of Mies van der Rohe's collages and *Rear Window* the investigative collages provided the framework to develop definable attributes of suspenseful space.

I. SLOW UNRAVELLING OF SPACE

In *Rear Window* Hitchcock slowly reveals the space the film is set in by using the camera to pan through it the courtyard. As the film progresses the audience develops a deeper sense of how spaces relate to each other as the characters move throughout the set, making visual connections for the audience. Architecturally this could be translated spatially by carefully restricting the view of the inhabitant by inhibiting an overall understanding of the layout of spaces.

II. REVEALING OR WITHHOLDING INFORMATION

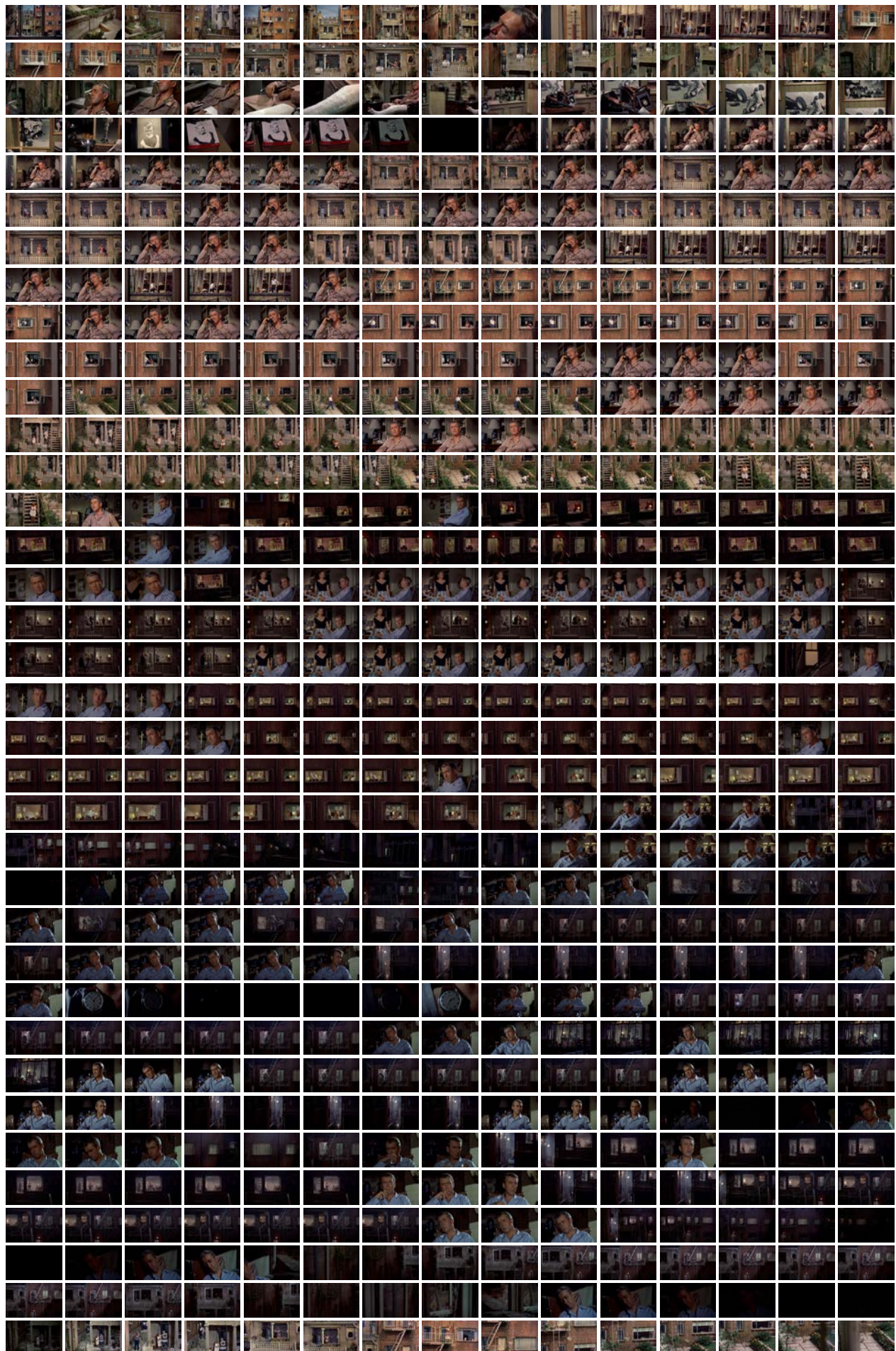
Hitchcock restricts the view of the audience and the characters to what is visible through facing windows. As a result, the viewer's understanding of space is incomplete and the view is inhibited by the opaque walls between windows. Characters move in and out of view developing uncertainty as to what occurs behind closed windows. Uncertainty could be spatially represented by restricting the view between consecutive spaces not allowing them to visual string into a whole.

III. CONTROLLING THE VIEW

Hitchcock, as director, has absolute control of the view. Hitchcock's monopoly of the frame causes the viewer to be completely at the mercy of his narrative. Similarly an architect, as a director of space, can carefully choreograph the view and subsequent movement of an individual through visual cues, although not entirely or precisely.

IV. UNCERTAINTY BUILT UP OVER TIME

In *Rear Window* this is evident through the progression of the film. Uncertainty builds throughout as the



Rear Window. Universal, 1954.

characters become suspicious of Thorwald but the evidence of his wrong doing remains incomplete. This building of uncertainty is released at its peak, in the climax of the plot, when the killer is revealed to be Thorwald and he finally confronts the spy Jefferies. This idea of uncertainty building up over time could be represented by a slow revelation of space. Perhaps there are a series of seemingly unrelated dark spaces that finally reveal a monumental light filled space. Spatially that might physically represent the cinematic idea.

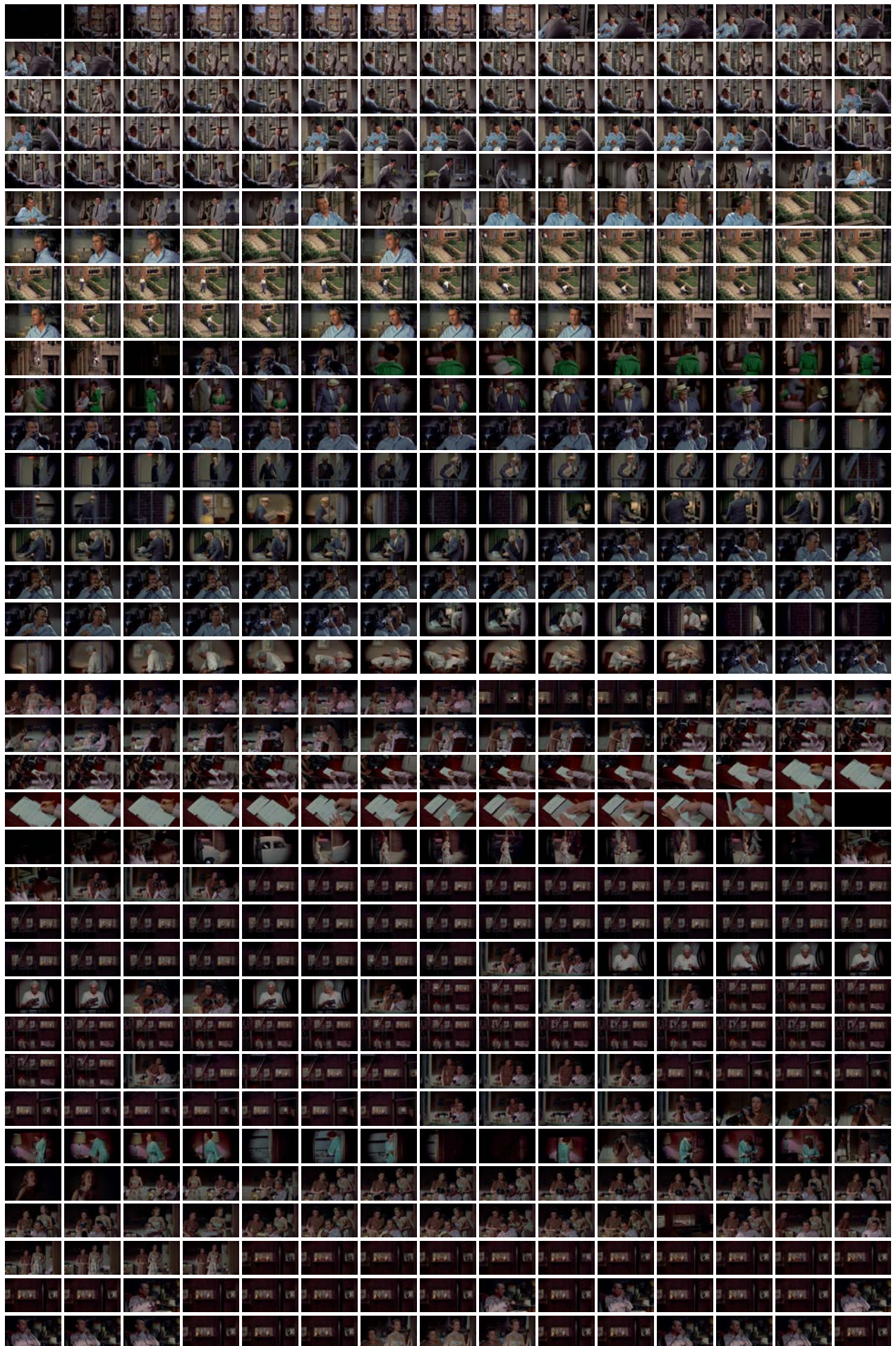
V. TENSION BETWEEN ELEMENTS

Rear Window develops tension specifically between the characters and the distance that separates them. This is emphasized by characters moving in and out of frame. The physical distance develops a perceived sense of security that is shattered when the characters come in direct contact with each other. Tension between elements exists within Mies's collages. The planes situated within space develop tension in their own right through their uncertain relationship. Tension could be applied as a space making strategy by placing elements in an ambiguous relationship with each other.

SCENE III : ANALYSIS THROUGH FRAMES

THROUGH THE PROCESS of creating the first series of collages it became evident attempting to display the entirety of the film within one drawing was not productive. That strategy would omit key pieces of information responsible for developing the plot and would not do justice to the complexity of *Rear Window*. Therefore, in order to most effectively represent and analyze *Rear Window* it was necessary to find moments and scenes most relevant to the plot. Additionally, in order to imply movement through time and space the collages would be represented as a series, similar to the way a director conceptualizes a film through storyboards. As a result, an analytical strategy was developed by taking *Rear Window* and dissecting it through frames. This creates a 2-dimensional representation of a film therefore connecting cinema to 2-dimensional representation of architecture through the medium of collage.

AN UNDERSTANDING of *Rear Windows's* overall narrative and Alfred Hitchcock's pacing of the film was developed by flattening the entirety of film in to a series of



Rear Window. Universal, 1954.

1300+ frames. The film naturally breaks itself down into groupings of scenes bringing to focus events that are relevant to the overall development of the plot and by extension suspense. In order to break the film down into manageable parts, all the frames were organized into categories based on the events they depicted. Those categories were then separated by their relevance to the plot and development of suspense. The relevant scenes were then compiled and organized into movements. The movements then further break down into 15 categories or scenes each represented by a collage in the final series of drawings. As a result, the compiled series of frames serve as a visual summary of the film through a series of still images. In a sense the collages themselves serve as a summary of *Rear Window*, albeit a re-presented one. This method of analysis fostered a deeper sense of understanding of *Rear Window* and Alfred Hitchcock's filmmaking techniques by becoming intimately familiar with each frame.

SCENE IV : NEW COMPOSITION

TO TRANSLATE THE ANALYSIS of *Rear Window*'s frames into an analysis of suspense in space a series of new collages were developed. Each collage was governed by the principles of suspense previously outlined and reiterated as follows:

I. SLOW UNRAVELLING OF SPACE

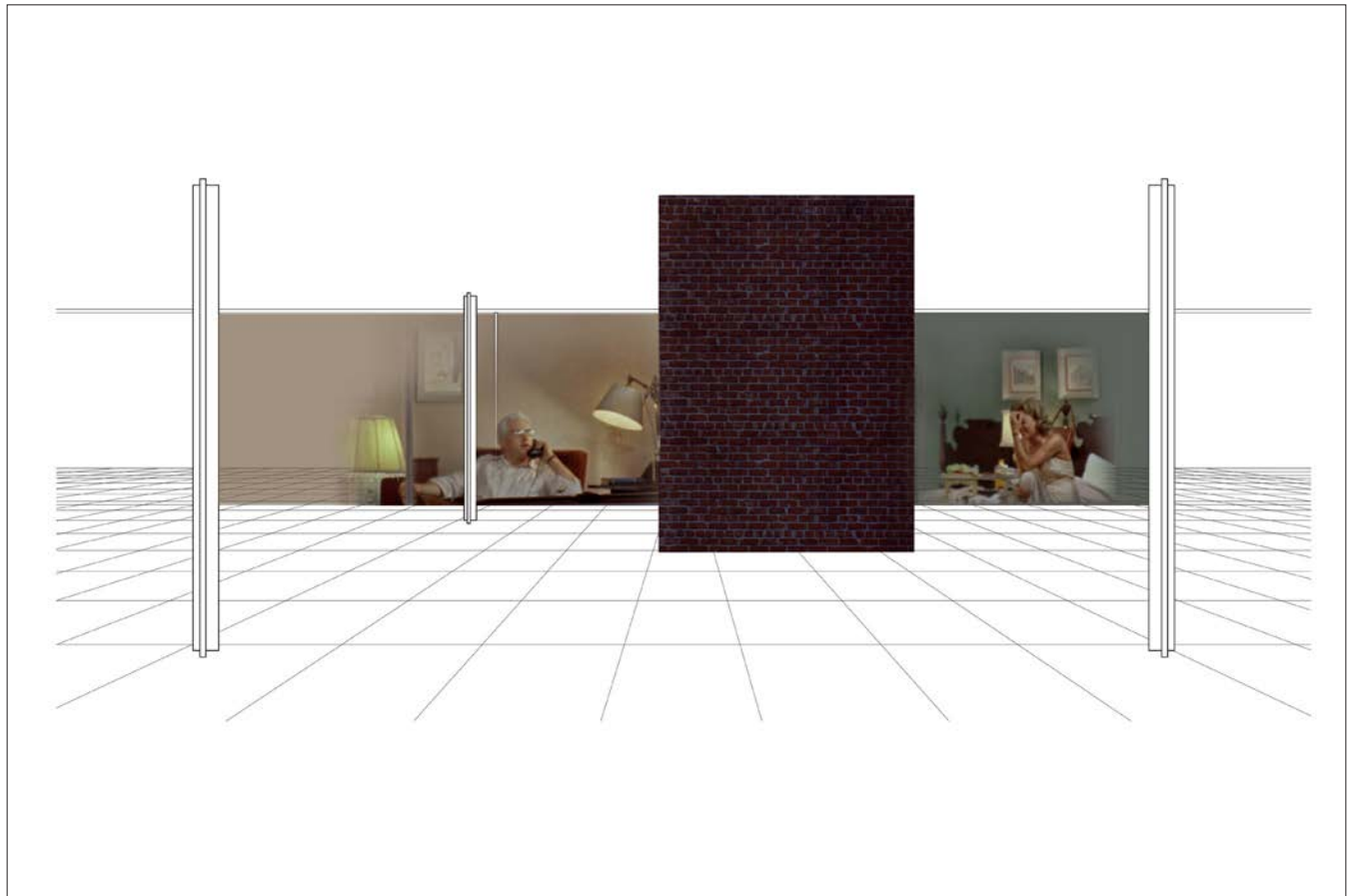
II. REVEALING OR WITHHOLDING INFORMATION

III. CONTROLLING THE VIEW

IV. UNCERTAINTY BUILT UP OVER TIME

V. TENSION BETWEEN ELEMENTS

THE 15 CATEGORIES of frames translates directly to the series of 15 collages, each capturing the essence of a scene. Furthermore, each collage represents a moment significant to the plot, and as a result the development of suspense. By removing elements of *Rear Window* and placing them within a new context, in this case a collage, it allows the elements that develop suspense to be the direct focus of the drawing. The principles of suspense inform each of the compositions and serve to determine the significant elements of *Rear Window* that exist within each collage. The collages are composed with a clear influence from Mies as a precedent through an understanding of composition developed through the initial process collages. As Mies was merely precedent and not the focus of the investigation the collages depart compositionally and spatially from their original influence. However they maintain a direct reference through the background line drawing used as a base for the composition. These are derived directly from Mies's collages. The use of the base image to place *Rear Window* elements within ground the composition allowing it to



1. INTRO THORWALD

Franzen, Andreas, Barry, Buchell, and Holger, *Mies van der Rohe, Montage, Collage*. (Walther 2017).
Rear Window. Universal, 1954.

The first collage introduces two characters in conflict. Mr. and Mrs. Thorwald are depicted here in the midst of a fight. The space visually and physically separates them, representing the divide in their relationship. As the collage serves to introduce the first two characters it also starts to slowly develop the space the series of collages begin to construct. This development of space mimics Hitchcock's technique of using the camera to pan and slowly unfold the set to the viewer.

read more tangibly as space. Each composition shifts and changes around the base image Mies provided.

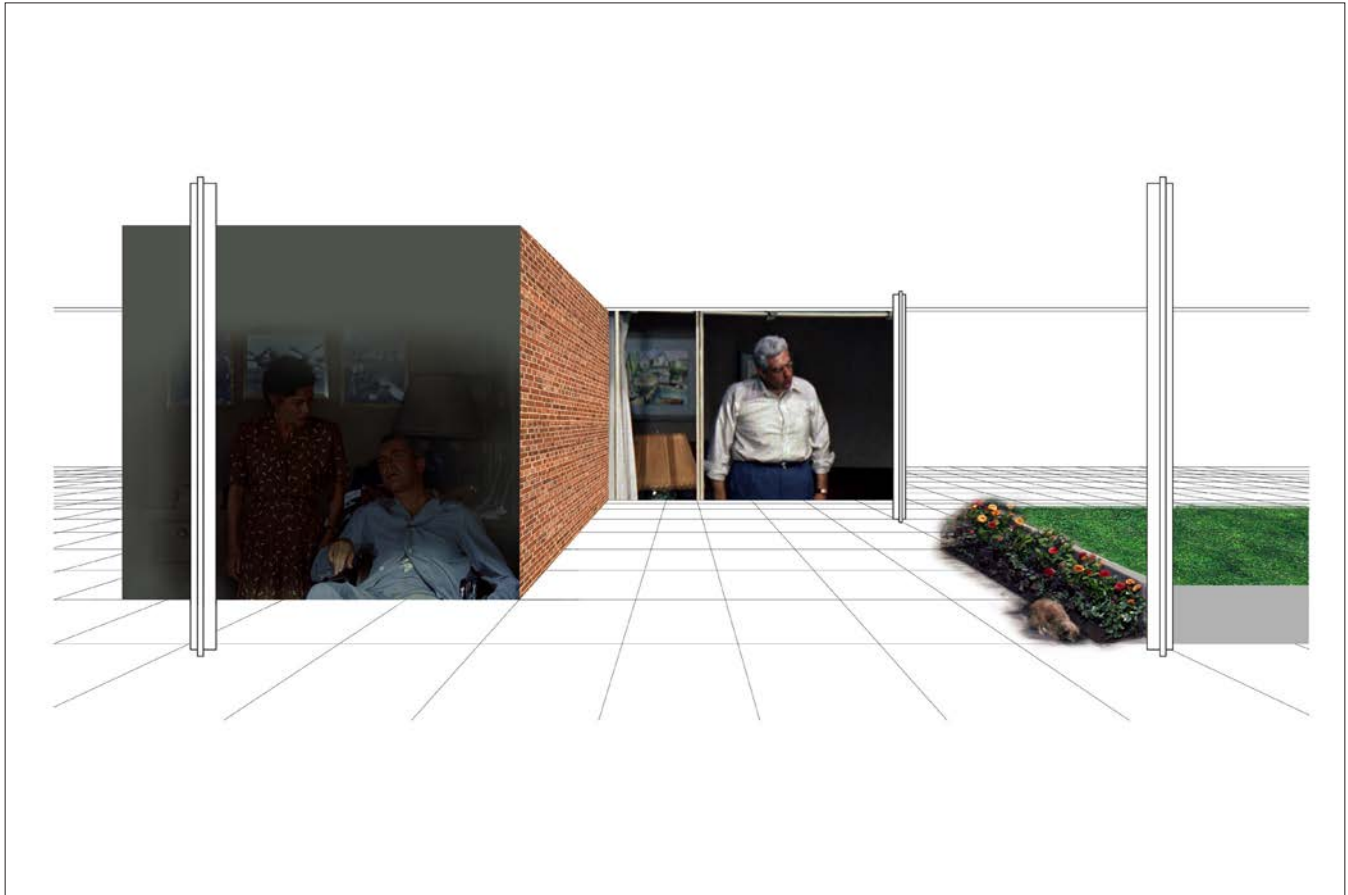
THE FIRST COLLAGE in the series represents the first moment the audience is introduced to Mr. and Mrs. Thorwald. It captures the essence of their fraught relationship. Being the first collage in the series, little of the overall space is revealed. The focus is solely on the two characters within their apartment. The brick wall puts a visual barrier between Mr. and Mrs. Thorwald representing the division of their relationship while also foreshadowing a future more permanent separation. Furthermore, the singular brick wall prevents the viewer from seeing the entirety of the apartment, leaving the space only partially understood. This condition mimics the set of *Rear Window* where each window is interrupted by interstitial brick walls. The view of the collage is controlled, focusing entirely on the relationship between the two characters interacting within their apartment. The one point perspective serves to ground the drawing allowing the planes to exist in relationship to each other within the preexisting condition. Suspense building up overtime is evident through the progression of the collages where the uncertainty of what occurred behind Thorwald's blinds intensifies. For example, the next collage in sequence focuses entirely on the instance where Thorwald disappears in and out of his apartment, disappearing into the unknown. Each collage builds upon the focus of the first collage, and the development of suspicion Jefferies harbors for Thorwald. Tension between elements exists by the insertion of the brick wall between the space containing Mrs. Thorwald and the space containing Mr. Thorwald. Ambiguity exists within the uncertainty of what lies beyond the brick wall and how the two characters' spaces are related. Spatially these inserted elements of *Rear Window* read either as one horizontal plane of windows interrupted by a vertical plane of brick or three separate planes of space. In each case what lies within the interstitial spaces can only be speculated. These spatial readings begin to translate into a development of a 3-dimensional representation of suspenseful space. The principles that are present in the first collage are reflected throughout the series of collages, directly translating the principles of suspense into spatial compositions.



2. THORWALD SUSPICION

Franzen, Andreas, Barry, Buchell, and Holger, *Mies van der Rohe, Montage, Collage*. (Walther 2017).
Rear Window. Universal, 1954.

The scene depicted within the collage is indicative of Hitchcock's strategy of withholding information from the viewer. The sequence of scenes depict Thorwald moving in and out of his apartment in the cover of darkness on a rainy night. Thorwald's blinds are drawn as he takes multiple trips carrying a large briefcase. The viewer and Jefferies is only left to speculate as to Thorwald's purpose that night. The collage attempts to replicate the feeling of uncertainty. Thorwald's figure is only visible through the window before his front door and the sliver of street visible through the alley. Spatially this is replicated through Thorwald's figure moving through a corridor to nowhere. The spatial connection between Thorwald's front door and the alleyway remains ambiguous. The plane Jefferies is contained in is situated slightly farther forward to imply distance from Thorwald emphasizing Jefferies's advantageous point of view.



3. THORWALD GAZE

Franzen, Andreas, Barry, Buchell, and Holger, *Mies van der Rohe, Montage, Collage*. (Walther 2017).
Rear Window. Universal, 1954.

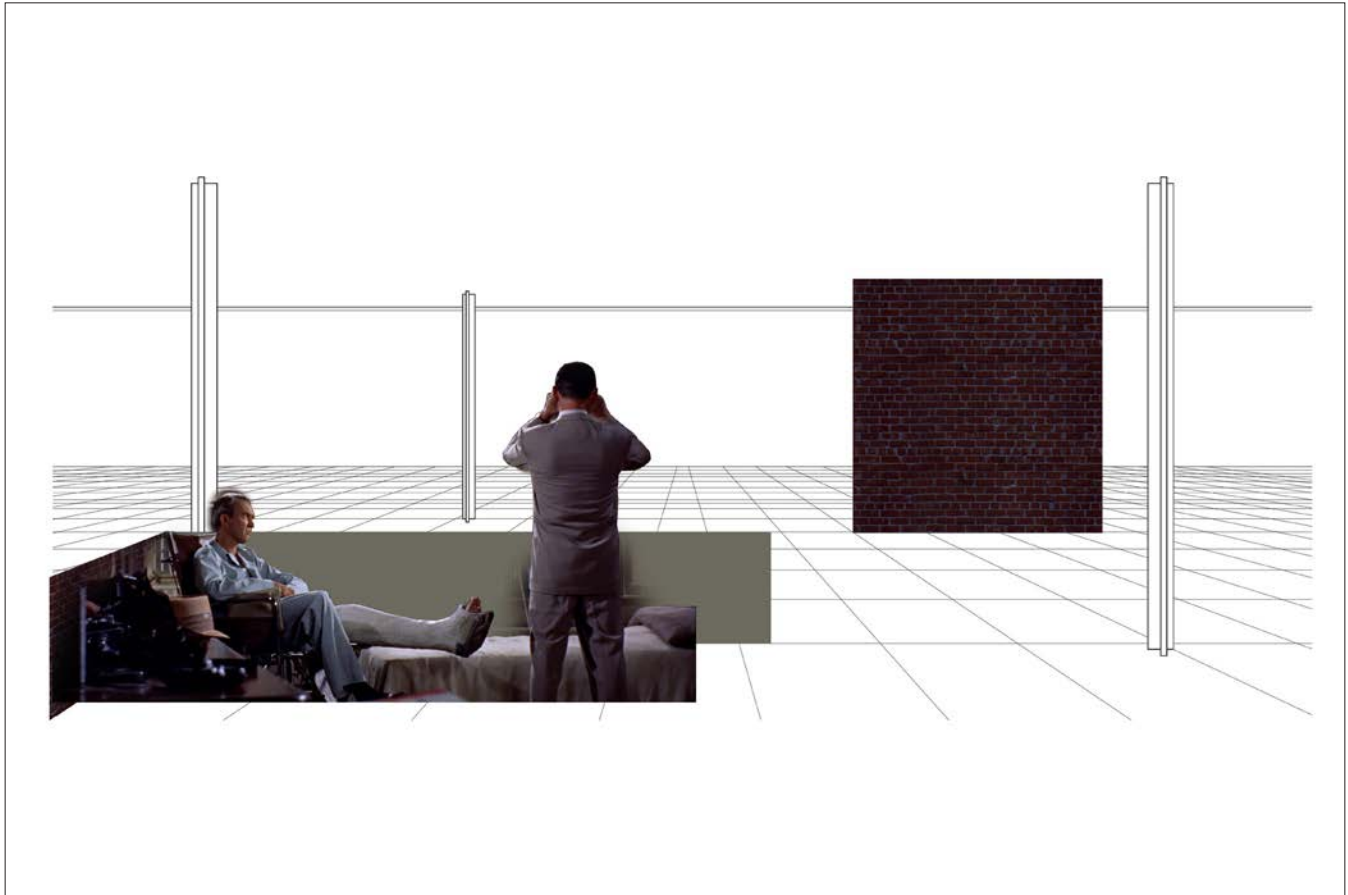
As the third collage in the sequence, the space constructed begins to develop and complexify. A series of related scenes are depicted, where Thorwald scolds a dog for digging in his flowerbeds, subsequently gazing out of his window to see who might be watching requiring Jefferies and Stella to retreat into the safety of the shadows. The complexity of the scene requires a more complex representation of space. By utilizing Thorwald's gaze, the flower bed is implied to exist below the plane of the brick wall. The surfaces containing Jefferies, Stella, and Thorwald are set in direct opposition to each other by their placement in space. However, the shared brick wall creates a physical connection between the characters while implying Thorwald is the figure Jefferies and Stella are hiding from. Suspense is evident through this tension.



4. CLEANING UP

Franzen, Andreas, Barry, Buchell, and Holger, *Mies van der Rohe, Montage, Collage*. (Walther 2017).
Rear Window. Universal, 1954.

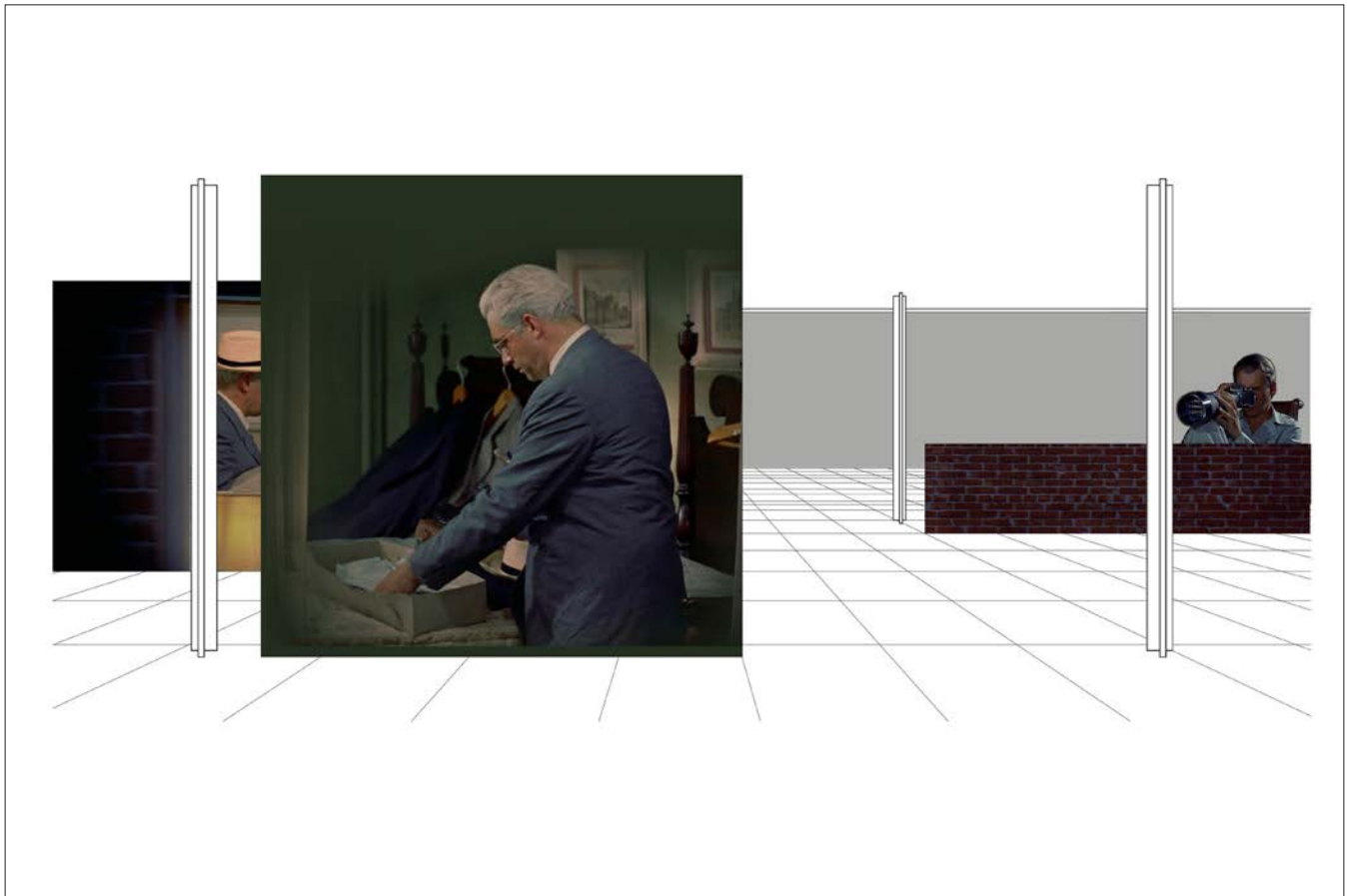
As Jefferies shares his suspicions, more characters get drawn into his voyeuristic game. Consistently throughout the film the neighbors all have their blinds and windows fully open, unconcerned by the lack of privacy this creates. The fact that Thorwald has his blinds drawn is enough to draw suspicion. The scene depicted here is where Jefferies convinces Lisa of the validity of his suspicions for Thorwald. An ominous feeling in this scene is emphasized as the pair observe Thorwald's silhouette moving through his apartment behind closed blinds. The collage creates a feeling of suspense through the uncertainty of Thorwald's movements. Repetition of the window along the horizon line makes it appear as though Lisa and Jefferies are being surrounded by Thorwald's foreboding presence. In this collage the view is controlled, focusing solely on the presence of an ambiguous silhouette and the figures of Lisa and Jefferies. The space is ambiguous through its lack of articulation and the implication that the brick wall along the horizon could continue infinitely.



5. DISBELIEF

Franzen, Andreas, Barry, Buchell, and Holger, *Mies van der Rohe, Montage, Collage*. (Walther 2017).
Rear Window. Universal, 1954.

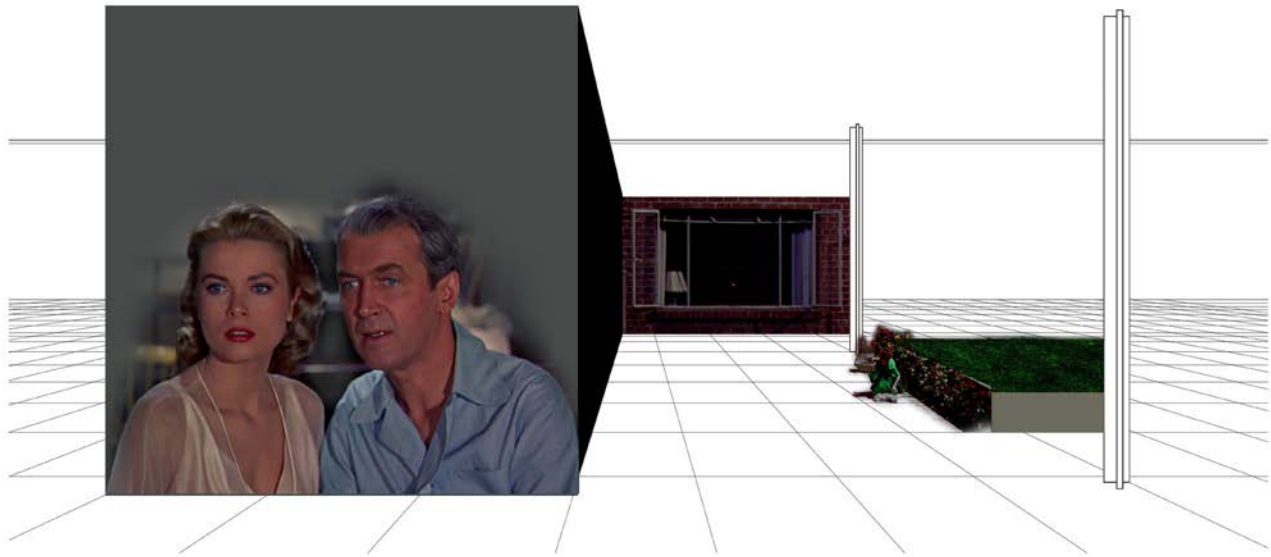
Not everyone Jefferies shares his suspicions with is convinced of their validity. The scene depicted here represent the moment Jefferies shares his fears with a cop. The cop sees no merit in Jefferies's theories. When the cop gazes across the courtyard to Thorwald's apartment he sees nothing remarkable. As a result, the presence of Thorwald is replaced with a blank brick wall representing the cop's disinterested gaze. The space is constructed minimally to represent the span of the courtyard separating Jefferies's window and Thorwald's apartment.



6. INTENTIONAL VOYEURISM

Franzen, Andreas, Barry, Buchell, and Holger, *Mies van der Rohe, Montage, Collage*. (Walther 2017).
Rear Window. Universal, 1954.

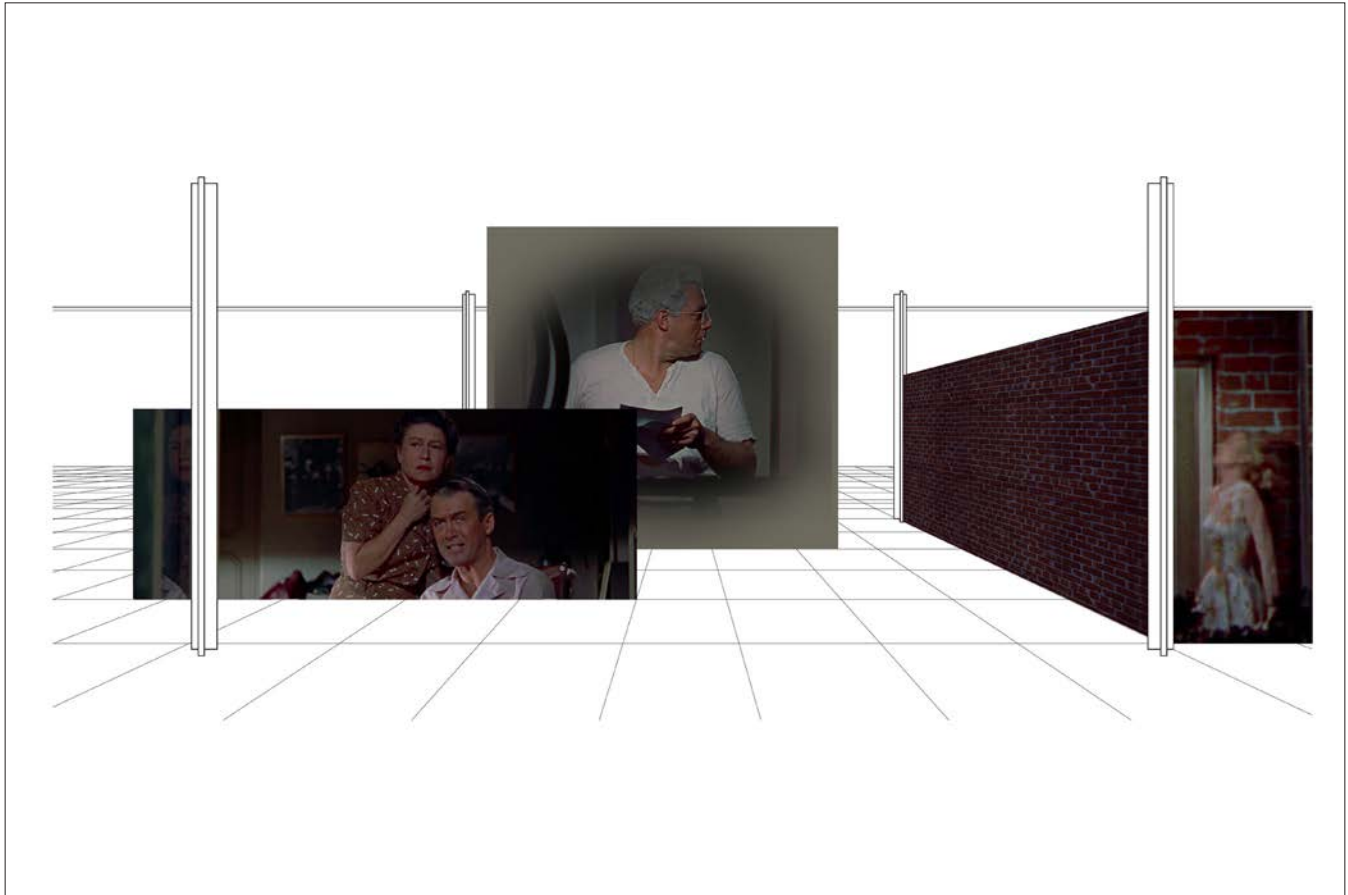
This collage represents a shift in the composition of the frame in *Rear Window*. Previously, the view into Thorwald's apartment was restricted to Jefferies's casual observation from his rear window. However, from this point forward Jefferies is more intentional relying on the use of equipment such as binoculars and professional cameras. The audience sees through Jefferies's point of view so the view of Thorwald is enlarged to represent this magnification. As a result, Thorwald moves to the foreground of the collage as the frame of Thorwald's rear window becomes the main frame of reference within the space. The scene depicted here is Thorwald cleaning up and putting his laundry away. The two overlapping planes depicting Thorwald represent the moments where he disappears from frame behind the brick walls separating his windows. Distance is still placed between Thorwald and Jefferies to represent their physical separation.



7. DOG MURDER

Franzen, Andreas, Barry, Buchell, and Holger, *Mies van der Rohe, Montage, Collage*. (Walther 2017).
Rear Window. Universal, 1954.

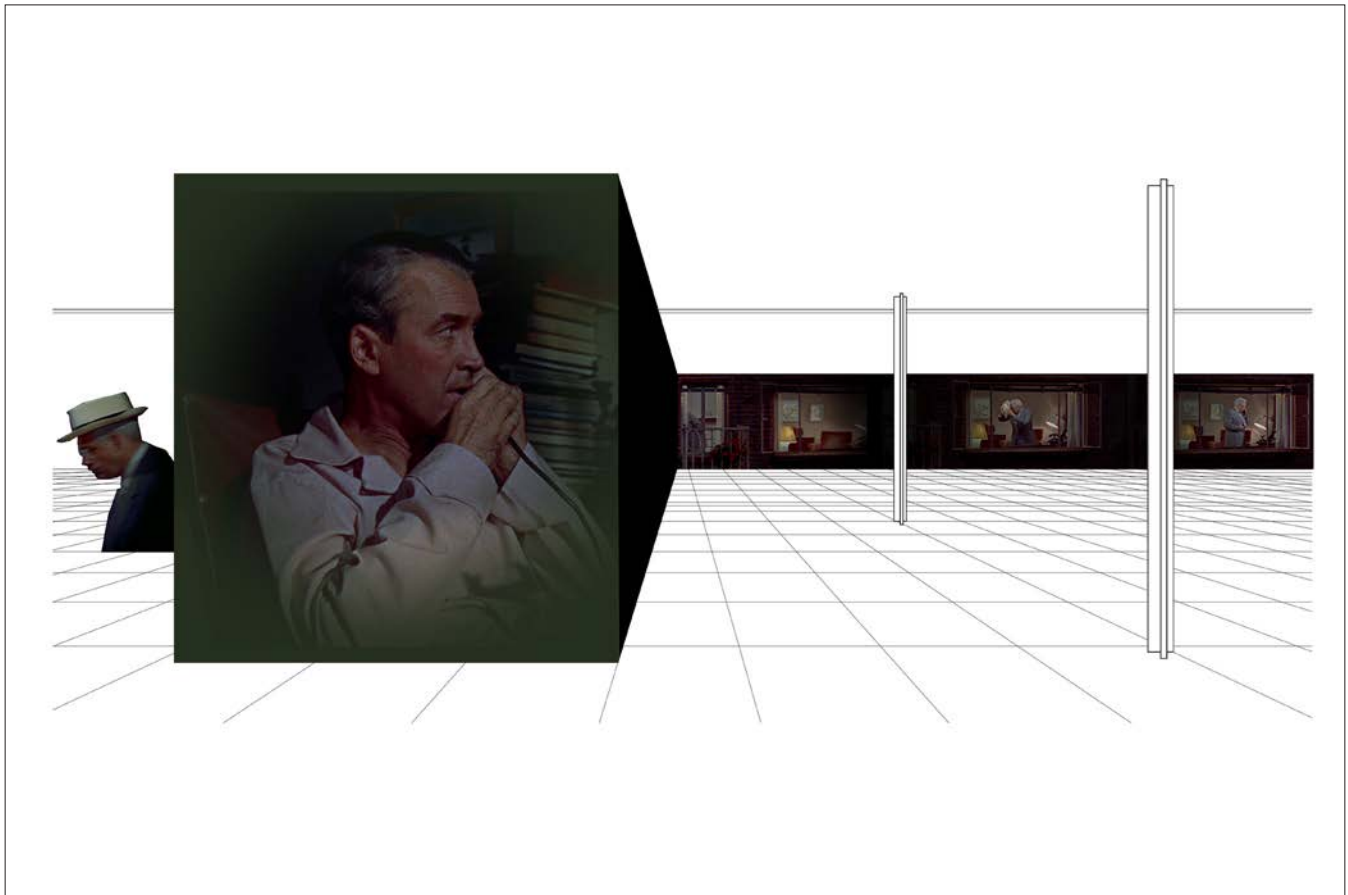
This collage mimics the same spatial organization of the third because the scenes depicted are similar. Both are focused on the character's gaze out their windows and down into the courtyard below. Instead of hiding from Thorwald, Lisa and Jefferies are prominent in the frame observing the discovery of a dog's murder. Thorwald is the only character in the scene not looking out of his window. The only indication of his presence is the faint glow of his cigarette. As the spatial organization is repeated, the collage begins to develop a build up of suspense overtime. Here the same context as the third collage is depicted but under different circumstances. Previously Thorwald was in the light of day now he ominously hides in the shadows. The scene reflects the change of atmosphere in the film as the set is now shrouded in darkness.



8. LETTER

Franzen, Andreas, Barry, Buchell, and Holger, *Mies van der Rohe, Montage, Collage*. (Walther 2017).
Rear Window. Universal, 1954.

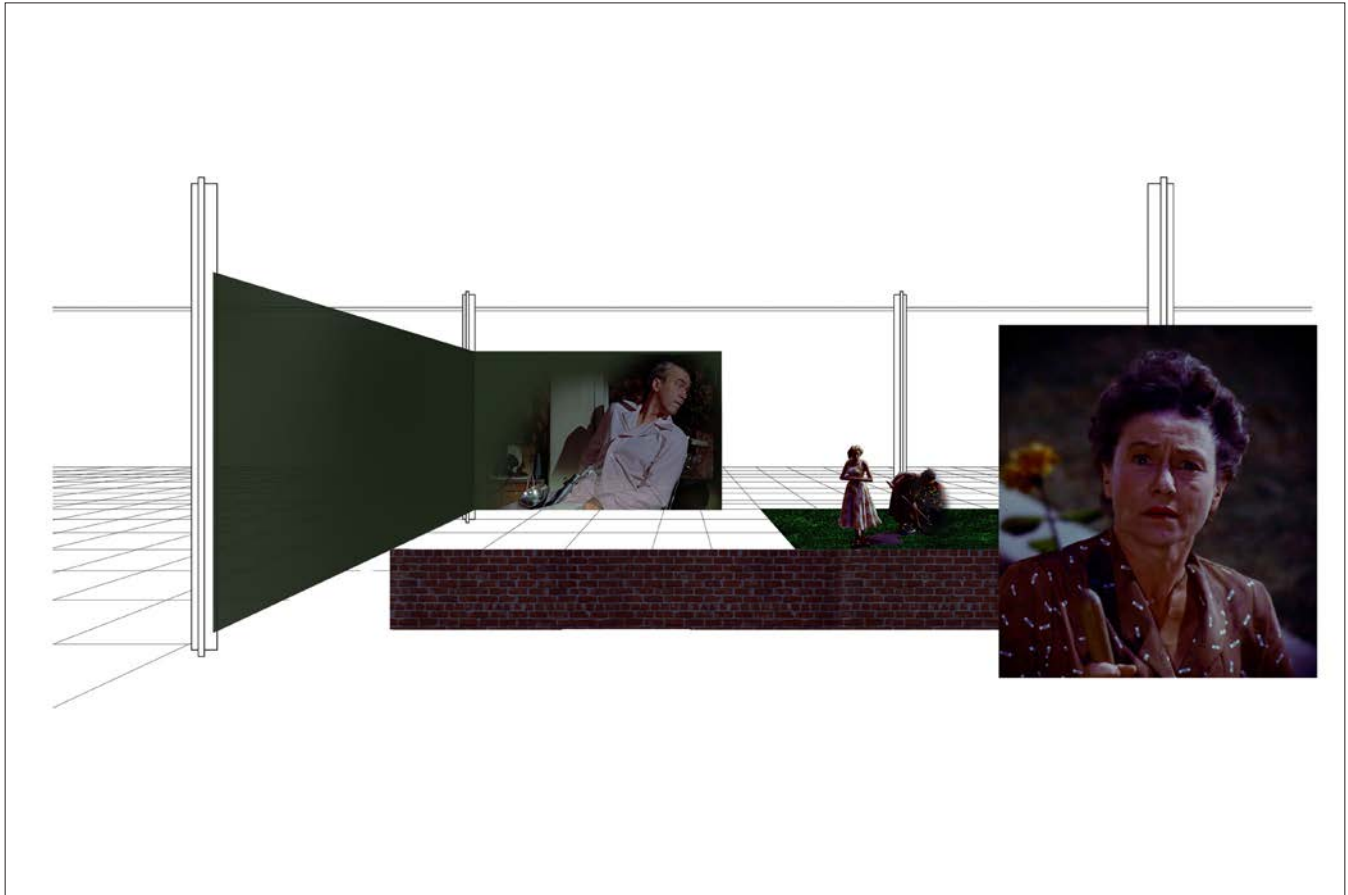
As the film progresses, the distance between characters starts to close as Jefferies, Stella, and Lisa begin to come in direct contact with Thorwald. The scene depicted in this collage is one moment where the distance is traversed. Jefferies writes a threatening letter to Thorwald and Lisa delivers it through the crack under his door, requiring her to hide to avoid discovery. The composition of space represents the claustrophobic nature of the scene. Lisa narrowly escapes discovery, only avoiding Thorwald by hiding. Stella and Jefferies are left to watch helpless from Jefferies's rear window. The planes containing each character are placed in close proximity, reflecting Lisa's narrow escape and the development of Thorwald's awareness of being watched.



9. PHONE CALL

Franzen, Andreas, Barry, Buchell, and Holger, *Mies van der Rohe, Montage, Collage*. (Walther 2017).
Rear Window. Universal, 1954.

Continuing with threats, Jefferies decides to call Thorwald to draw him out of his apartment. This distraction allows Lisa and Stella to investigate. This collage depicts the moment Thorwald receives the call and heads out the door. The focus of the collage is on Thorwald's movements. Consistently throughout the film Thorwald's movements are unclear and unexplained, as the path from one space to another is obscured. Here Thorwald is visible through the windows of his apartment, locking the door, and suddenly reappearing behind Jefferies's shoulder. This ambiguous representation of space develops a feeling of uncertainty about Thorwald and his movements.



10. JEFFERIES AS LOOKOUT

Franzen, Andreas, Barry, Buchell, and Holger, *Mies van der Rohe, Montage, Collage*. (Walther 2017).
Rear Window. Universal, 1954.

Immediately after Thorwald disappears onto the unknown street beyond the alley, Stella and Lisa hurry to the courtyard suspecting evidence is buried within Thorwald's flowerbeds. Jefferies acts as a lookout and as a result he is depicted carefully watching the courtyard below for signs of Thorwald's return. Spatially the collage is arranged to privilege the ground plane, emphasizing the space of the courtyard and the figures within. The planes of Jefferies and Stella enclose and define the area of the courtyard within the collage. With Thorwald's apartment omitted the absence is felt as the characters anxiously await his return.



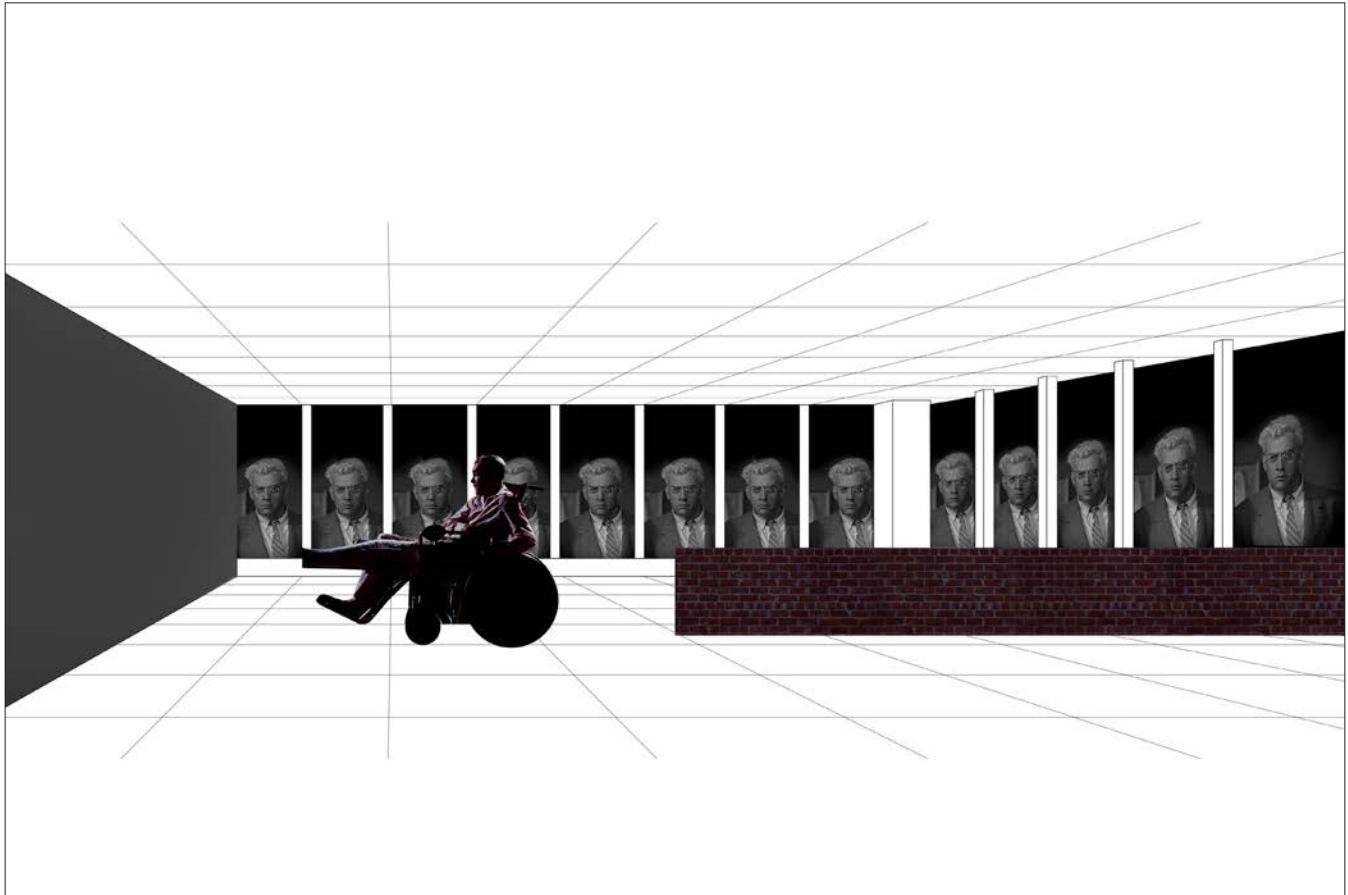
11. LISA CLIMBING

Franzen, Andreas, Barry, Buchell, and Holger, *Mies van der Rohe, Montage, Collage*. (Walther 2017).
Rear Window. Universal, 1954.

The view of the collage above is intensely focused as Jefferies's eyes are trained completely on Lisa's movements. Having no success digging in the flowerbed, Lisa decides to scale the fire escape, breaking into Thorwald's apartment despite his inevitable return. As Jefferies cares deeply for Lisa his focus is entirely on her. As the audience's gaze is directed by Jefferies her progress is carefully observed and anticipated. Distance between Jefferies and Lisa is evident through their scale and position within the frame of the collage. Jefferies is rendered helpless and he is unable to rescue Lisa if she gets caught because he is bound to his wheelchair. The black plane filling the void of the window represents the unknown and forbidding nature of Thorwald's apartment.

Franzen, Andreas, Barry, Buchell, and Holger, *Mies van der Rohe, Montage, Collage*. (Walther 2017).
Rear Window. Universal, 1954.

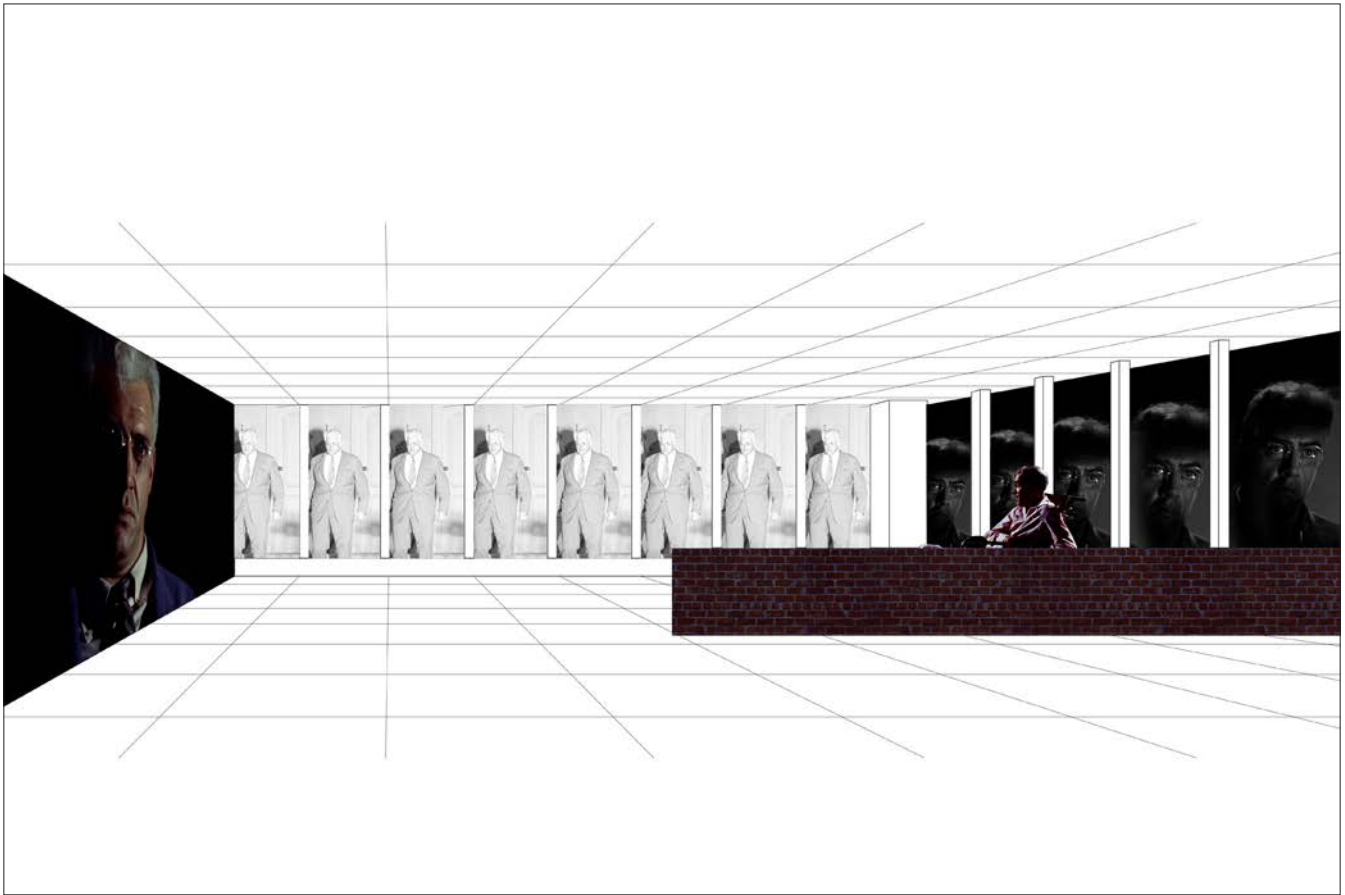
Events begin to intensify as Thorwald catches Lisa trespassing in his apartment. Stella and Jefferies's only means of intervening is calling the cops and waiting for them to arrive. The intense scale and saturation of the characters reflects the intensity of the moment where Thorwald attacks Lisa. Lisa and Jefferies are set apart reflecting their helplessness in the moment. The brick walls are placed to obscure the large window mimicking the brick walls concealing Thorwald's apartment. The composition change further illustrates the distance closing between the characters. As Lisa comes in direct physical confrontation with Thorwald the space within collage becomes more claustrophobic and confined.



13. EYE CONTACT

Franzen, Andreas, Barry, Buchell, and Holger, *Mies van der Rohe, Montage, Collage*. (Walther 2017).
Rear Window. Universal, 1954.

In this moment, Thorwald's gaze meets Jefferies's and the power dynamic shifts. Unlike Jefferies, Thorwald has the ability to physically confront Jefferies. The change in composition represents the change in view. The view is no longer Jefferies gazing out of his rear window but a view of the apartment's interior as Jefferies waits. The gaze of Thorwald surrounds Jefferies, as he can do nothing but wait for the imminent confrontation. The windows take on the form of a solid plane as Thorwald fully inhabits the spaces. The repetition of Thorwald in each window reflects the uncertainty of the threat. The blank gray plane takes on particular significance as Jefferies gazes at it as if waiting for Thorwald to emerge from its blank face.



14. JEFFERIES CORNERED

Franzen, Andreas, Barry, Buchell, and Holger, *Mies van der Rohe, Montage, Collage*. (Walther 2017).
Rear Window. Universal, 1954.

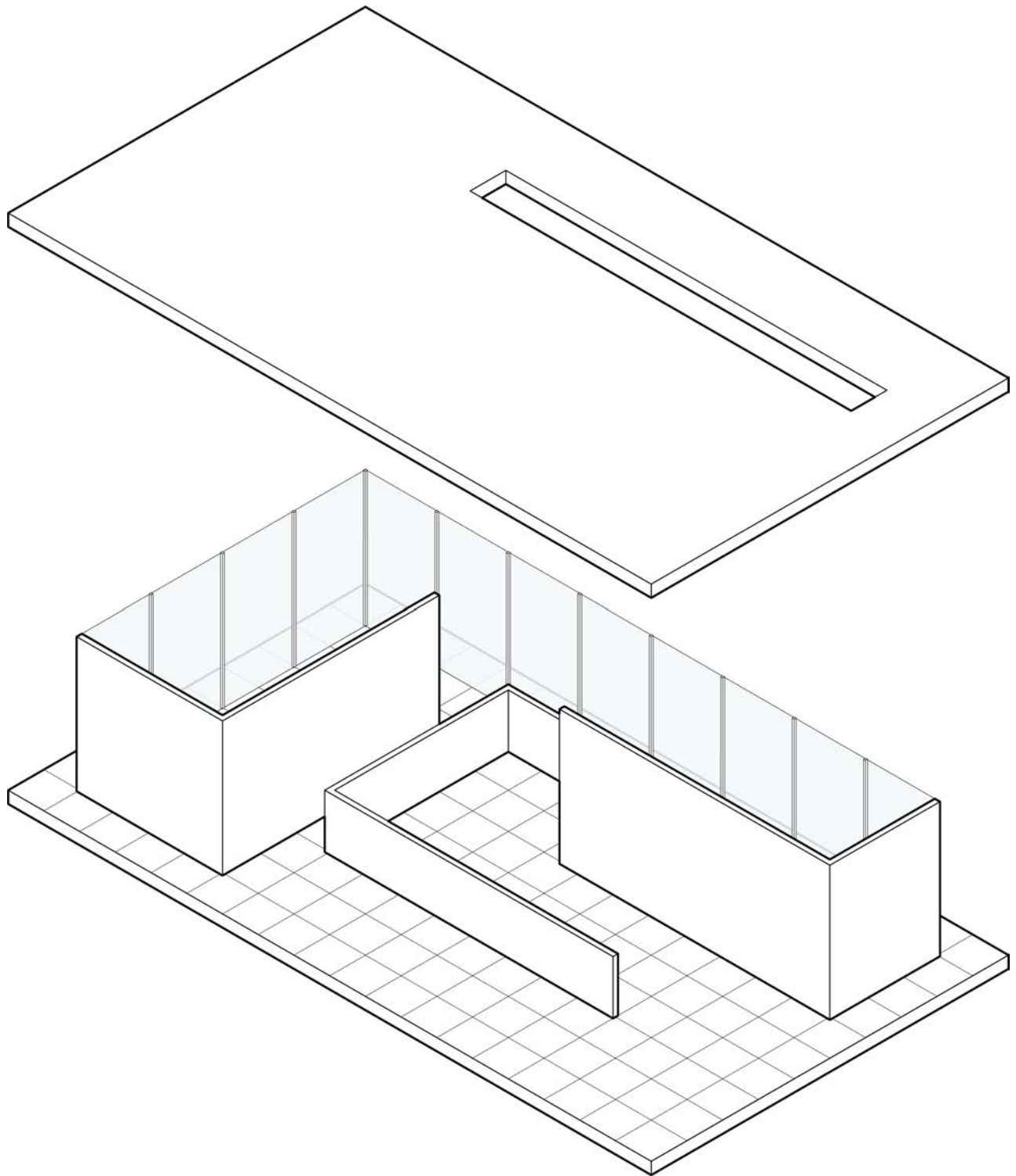
The same composition is used as the previous collage however this iteration implies Thorwald's approach through time and space. The previously empty plane is now inhabited by Thorwald and his threatening gaze. Jefferies hides behind the thin brick plane providing only a false sense of security as there is no where to hide in his small apartment.



15. JEFFERIES THROWN

Franzen, Andreas, Barry, Buchell, and Holger, *Mies van der Rohe, Montage, Collage*. (Walther 2017).
Rear Window. Universal, 1954.

The final collage in the sequence changes composition to reflect the change in situation. The view is again towards a rear window however, the point of view is now flipped to face Jefferies's rear window as observed from the courtyard. This is one of the few instances in the film where the camera's point of view is shifted from the safety of Jefferies's apartment. People below are only able to watch as Jefferies is thrown from his window in a final confrontation. The collage composition is flattened as the scene is entirely focused on the rear window.



Spatial Model Axon 1

The space unfolds similarly to the progression of collages, revealing itself gradually. An individual is guided through the space by the directional suggestion of planes. Openings are suggested by the folding of planes in space and light serving to guide a person through the space.

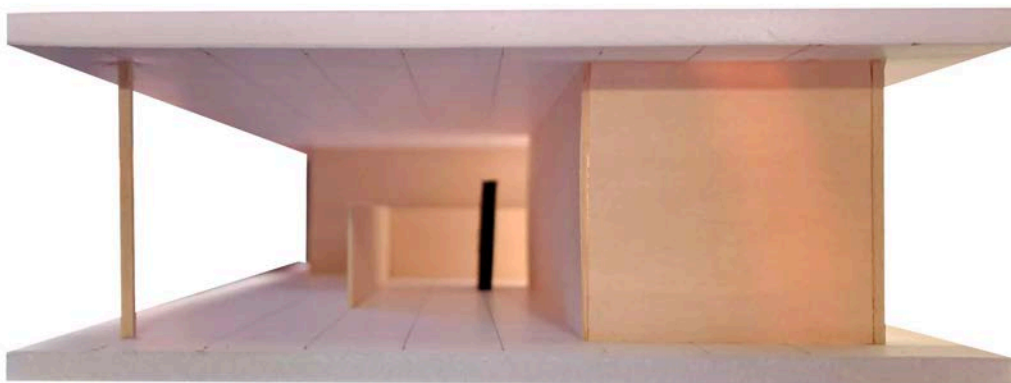
SCENE V : SUSPENSEFUL SPACE

TO BRING THE BODY OF RESEARCH full circle, the 2-dimensional investigation of space is translated into 3-dimensions. The spaces developed from the series of collages through the principles of suspense can be utilized to conceive architecturally suspenseful space. Collages serve as the process of investigating this potential. The overall goal of this research is to discover how Hitchcock's construction of suspenseful space translates architecturally. While this is inherently explored through collages the tangible architectural application occurs in the physical manifestation of space. As a result, the compositions within collages provide the framework for 3-dimensional spatial development. Each model is not made in a particular scale but rather are proportionally related to the size of the collages. The dimensions of Mies's original collages are 30" x 40". As a result, the physical models are scaled proportionally where the dimensions of the base are 5" x 10". The height is measured proportionally to mimic the effect of the perspective within the collages. The first model in the series attempts to directly translate each collage explicitly into the model. Initially one side represented one collage however, in order to incorporate all 15, each side layers multiple collages into the composition. In the same way a singular collage cannot capture the essence of an entire film, a single model cannot explicitly capture the entire series of collages. As a result, each subsequent model takes the collages and captures the essence of the series. Spatial and compositional discoveries found through the iterative collage process influences the physical models directly. The models represent the essence of the collages in the same way the collages represent the essence of *Rear Window* through Mies's visual representation of space. Through the translation of collages to spatial models it is evident that suspenseful space requires animation by inhabitation. The collages are inhabited by the characters of *Rear Window*, however the models omit that direct reference. Architecture provides the framework for suspense to exist spatially however, inhabitants activate the emotional aspect of suspense that is felt and experienced. This allows the undefinable cinematic quality of suspense in cinema to infuse architectural space making strategies.

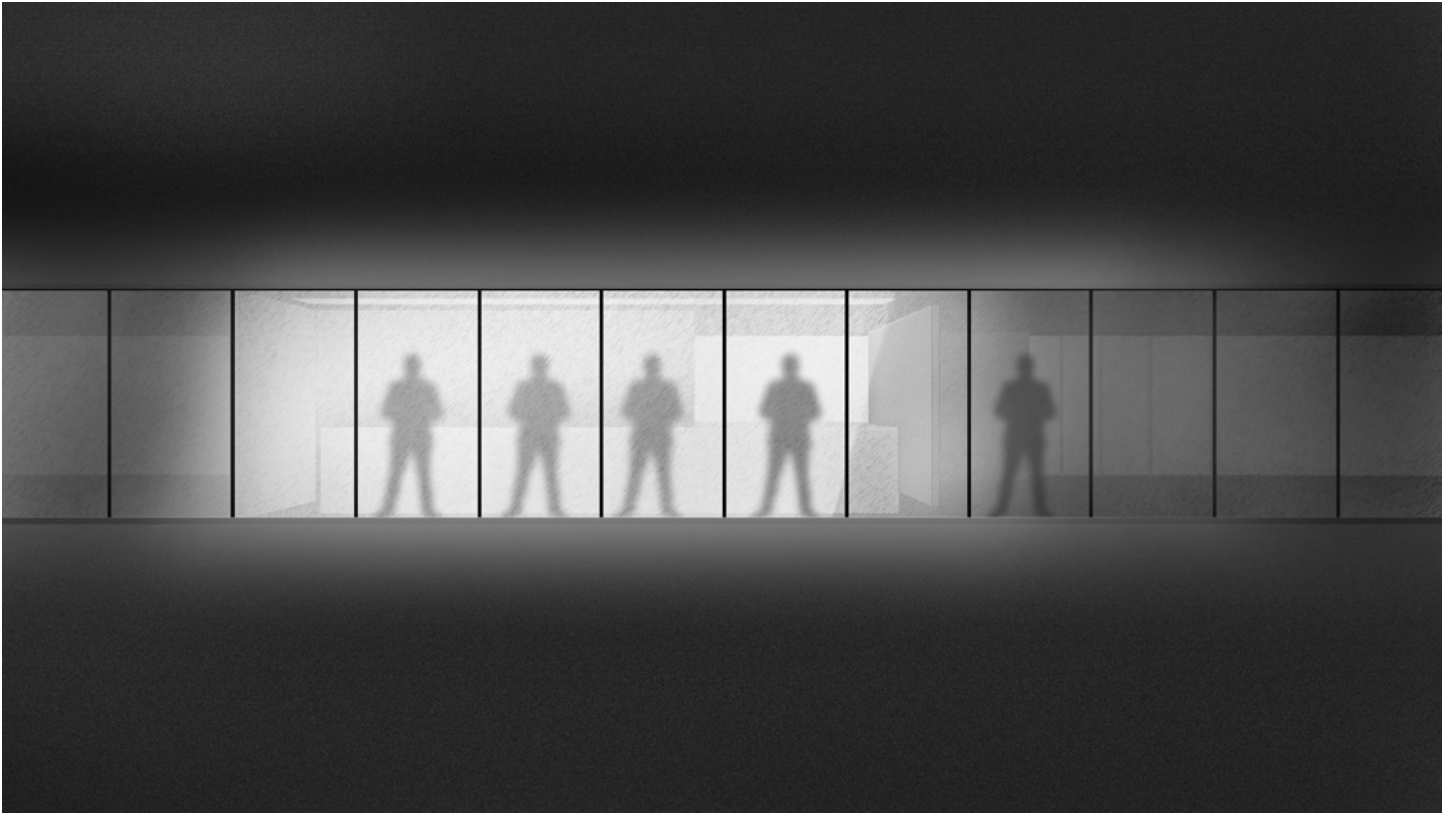
FADE OUT :



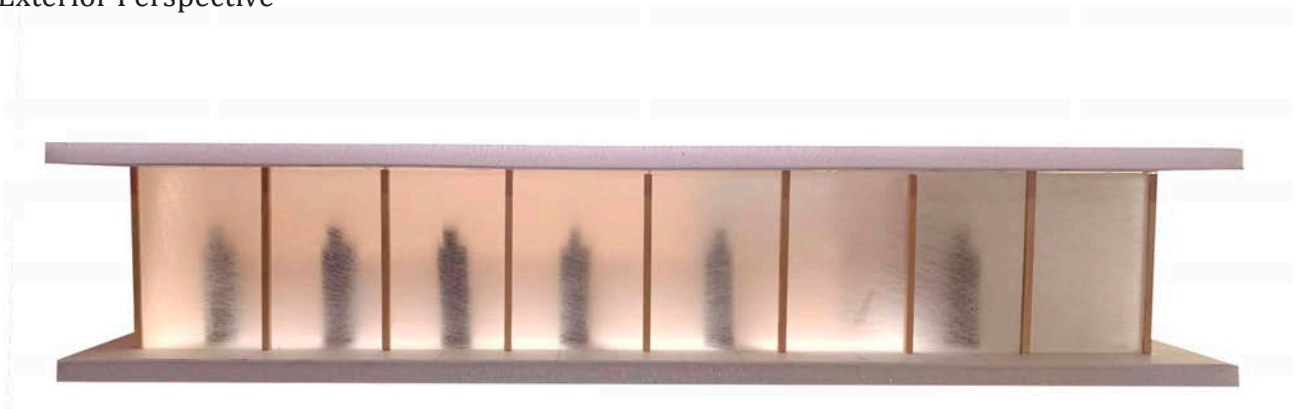
Interior Perspective



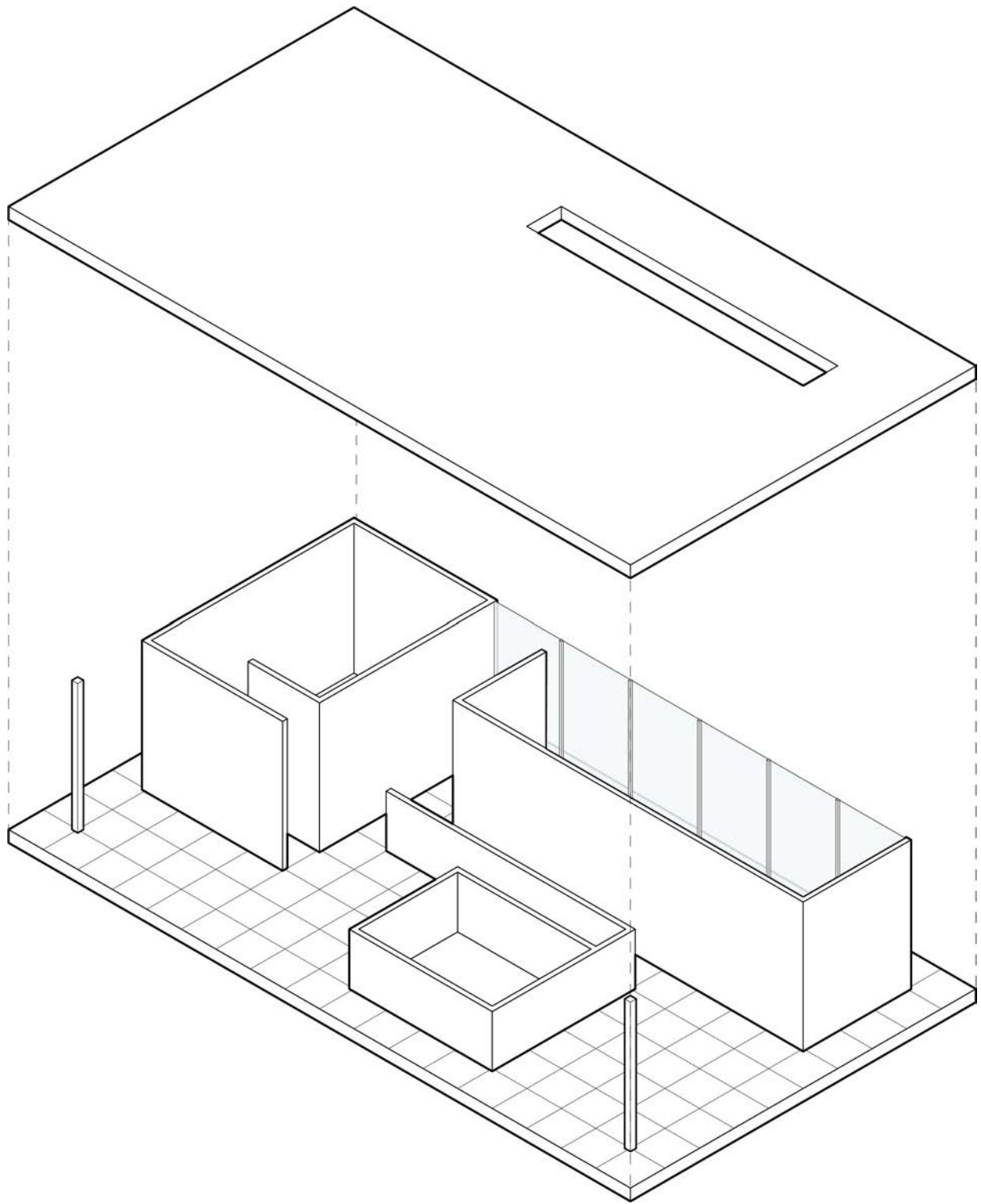
Physical Model



Exterior Perspective

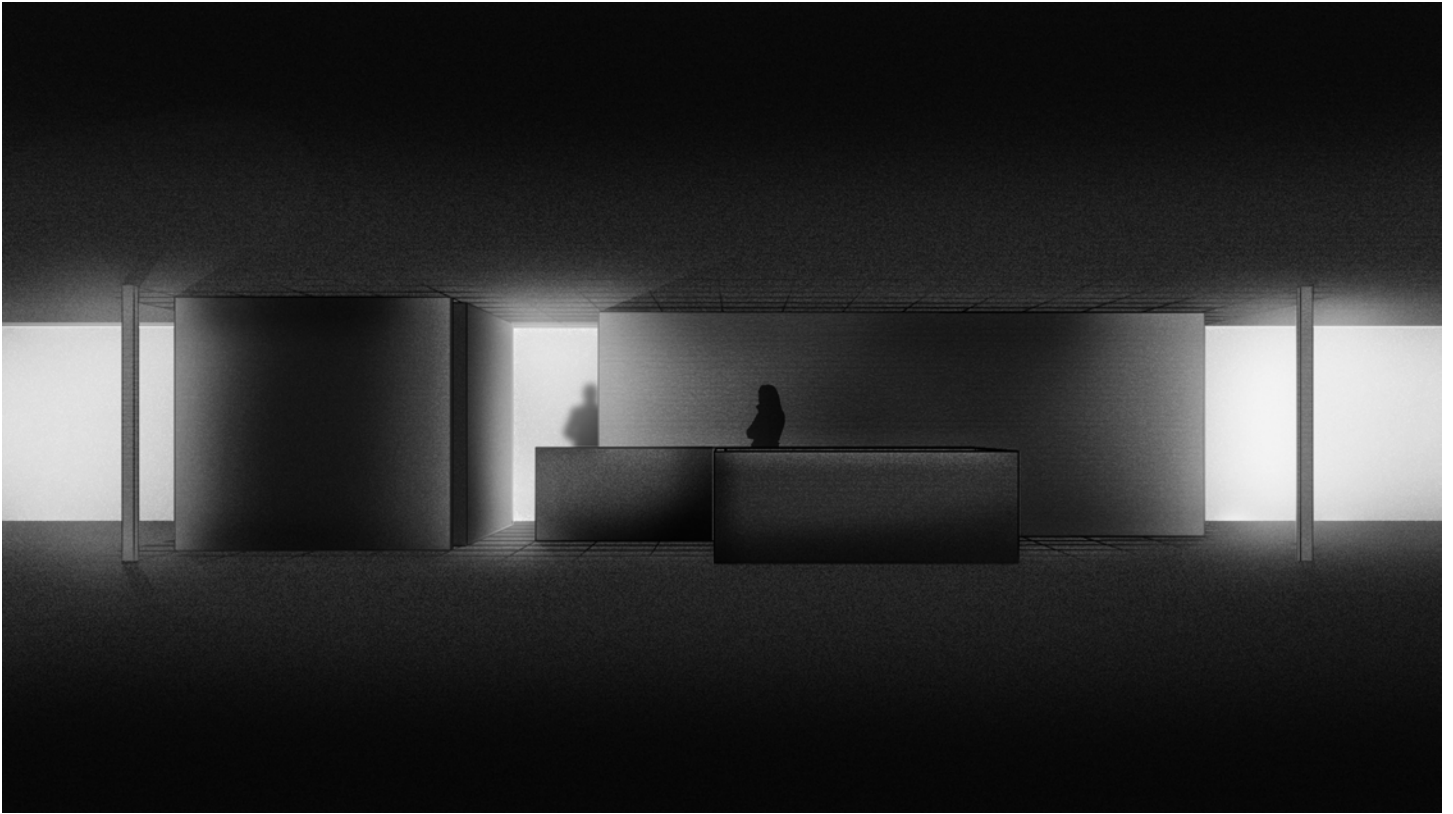


Physical Model

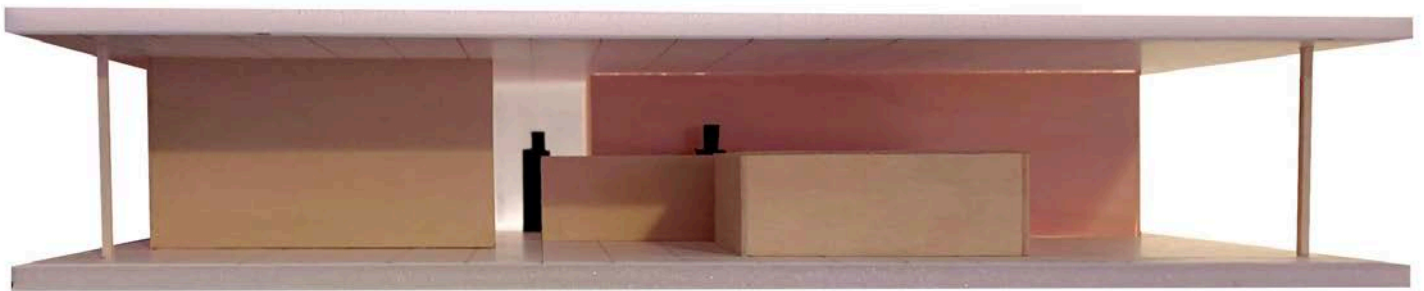


Spatial Model Axon 2

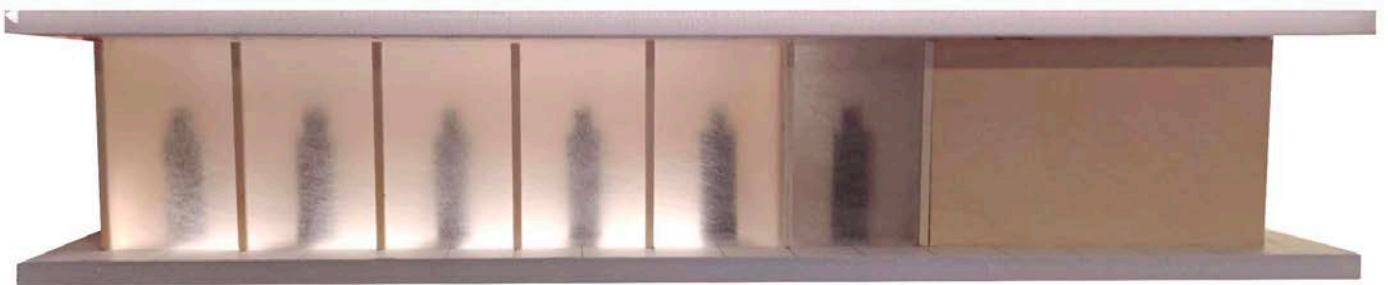
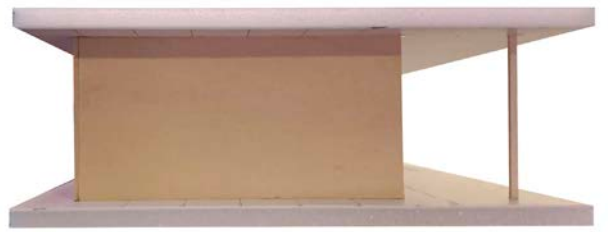
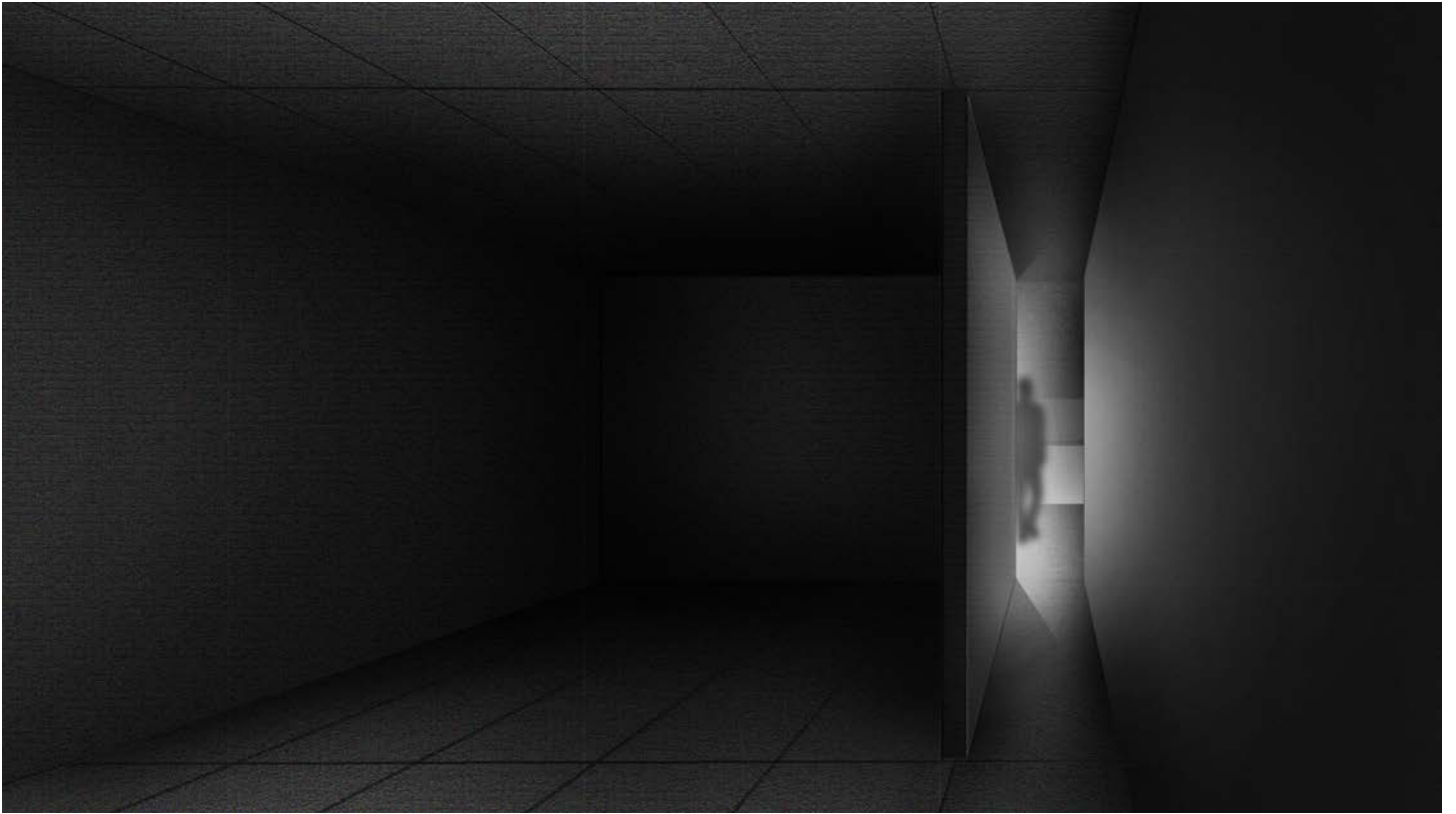
The figures serve to animate the space and develop a sense of suspense. Tension between the figures develops a sense of uncertainty and foreboding about what lies around the next corner.



Exterior Perspective



Physical Model



FADE IN :

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD – DAY – LONG SHOT⁴³

ACT V: REFLECTION

There are elements of suspense to be found in all levels of architecture. Architects act as the director of experience throughout a project, choreographing the way and individual moves through and encounters space. Throughout this process it has become evident that architecture provides the conditions for suspense to exist but requires inhabitation to become fully realized. *Rear Window* without the characters would be a nondescript New York apartment building. With the presence of characters Hitchcock is able to animate the space creating significance where otherwise there was none. The narrative of the film is entirely guided by the gaze of the characters and their movement through space. In a sense there is a parallel to be drawn between this aspect of cinema and architecture. Space should be developed and defined by the experience it offers the user. Whether it be discovery and revelation in Carlo Scarpa's addition to Castelveccio or the nearly spiritual experience of walking through the Pantheon in Rome for the first time as the light from the oculus is gradually revealed upon entry. The experience is central to the impact of these buildings the most influential of which evoke some version of an emotional reaction. Suspense is a feeling, developed through and experienced within space. In cinema space is freed from the practical restrictions reality places on architecture. A director is able to have complete control of the view, carefully framing each shot. Architects are not afforded this luxury however, the same attention to detail can be applied. A focus on an individual's experience and perception of space leads to an attention to detail at all levels of a project. The overall spatial construction is just as significant as the materials of the ground plane or the feeling of a door handle in the hand of an individual encountering the space. Where Alfred Hitchcock is able to create significance out of an insignificant apartment complex, architects are able to create significance out of the insignificant objects and moments of everyday life.

⁴³ Hayes, John Michael. *Rear Window*. Film Script. 1953.



Rear Window. Universal, 1954.

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